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A. L. Barbauld

From a Medallion by Wedgwood.

MEMOIR

OF

MRS. BARBAULD,

INCLUDING

LETTERS AND NOTICES

OF HER FAMILY AND FRIENDS.

BY HER GREAT NIECE

ANNA LETITIA LE BRETON.

LONDON:
GEORGE BELL AND SONS,
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1874.

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MEMOIR.

PREFACE.

The writer of the following Memoir is one of the few surviving members of Mrs. Barbauld's family who retains a personal recollection of her, having spent much of her early life under her care, owing her likewise a large debt of gratitude and love. Earnestly desiring to revive some memory of one who though enjoying in her lifetime a considerable amount of literary fame, is now, from the circumstance of her works having been long out of print and difficult to procure, comparatively unknown to the present generation, the author has availed herself of a collection of letters and family papers in her possession, to compile a fuller account of the life and family of Mrs. Barbauld, than her niece Lucy Aikin thought herself justified in doing, when she wrote the original Life, prefixed to the edition of the Works of Mrs. Barbauld, published soon after her death in 1825.

Feelings of delicacy towards members of Mr. Barbauld's family, then living, prevented the true account being given of the unfortunate state of mind with which her husband became afflicted, a calamity which in a great degree crippled her powers for many of the

best years of her life. Many names were also suppressed for reasons no longer existing.

The account of Mrs. Barbauld's ancestors, written in late years by Miss Aikin, for the benefit of the younger members of her family; though not intended for publication, is now printed to shew the influences which in part formed Mrs. Barbauld's pure and noble character.

The poems alluded to in the course of the Memoir, will be found at the end of the volume; as well as her Essay "On Inconsistency in our Expectations," which has always been considered one of the most finished of her prose writings, and was a few years ago printed and circulated by an unknown friend. The portrait prefixed, is from a cameo, for which she sat about the year 1773, at the request of her valued friend Josiah Wedgwood.

Hampstead, 1874.

CONTENTS.

MEMOIR.

APPENDIX. Page.

Letter from Rev. Dr. Doddridge to Miss Jennings 201

Bonner's Ghost by Mrs. Hannah More .. 205

Answer by Mrs. Barbauld 208

Washing Day 211

Life 215

Enigma 217

Notice of Arthur Aikin 219

Essay on Inconsistency in our Expectations 225

MEMOIR.

Anna Letitia, the eldest child, and only daughter of John Aikin, D.D. and Jane his wife, daughter of the Rev. John Jennings, was born at the village of Kibworth Harcourt in Leicestershire, on the 20th June, 1743.

The following particulars relating to her family, are taken from some unpublished memorials written by the late Lucy Aikin, her niece.

"John Aikin, my great grandfather," says Miss Aikin, "transferred himself at an early age from the Scotch town of Kircudbright to London. How long this place

had been the *seat of the Aikins*, or what station they held there, I cannot say, all that my father knew on the subject was, that the family arms were registered in the Herald's Office at Edinburgh; consequently that they, like Scotchmen in general, laid claim to 'Gentle blood,' however little they might possess of the world's wealth.

Of the career of my great grandfather in London, I am equally uninformed, till he became the master of a linen draper's shop in that part of Newgate Street than called Blowbladder Street, from the vicinity of the great meat market of the city. He appears at this time to have been a man of substance, and he took to wife Anne Bentall, whose father was deacon of the congregation of that Daniel Burgess of whom Swift has left us an amusing notice in the Tatler, showing him to be more rogue than fool in his fanatical rants. An old portrait of my great grandmother which I have seen, represented her with nothing striking about her except a profusion of long ringlets, which had certainly nothing of Puritan primness. My

father had a great notion that she was a very silly woman, and handed down to his posterity this one anecdote of her. Some few months before the birth of her eldest son, walking with her husband in the fields, she was siezed with a violent longing to crop a few mouthfuls of the tempting herbage. In those days, as we have all heard, any fancy of a matron under such circumstances *must* be gratified at all events. Precious privilege, now lost to the sex! Down therefore went the dame on hands and knees and *grazed*. To this circumstance my father added, that his father, between jest and earnest, would ascribe his rural tastes!

This couple had three sons, of whom my grandfather was the eldest. He was at first destined for commerce, and placed in a mercantile house as *French clerk*. I presume he had acquired this language at his school, the master of which was probably no deep classic, but having been an actor, taught him that impressive declamation of English verse for which he was always distinguished. An ardent love of study, and

conscious power of intellect, soon rendered the routine of the counting house insupportable to him, and he prevailed upon an indulgent father to enter him a pupil of the Kibworth Academy, afterwards removed to Northampton.

Of this institution, by the early death of my great grandfather, the Rev. John Jennings, Dr. Doddridge had become the head, but so recently that young Aikin was his first pupil.....The prosperity of my great grandfather gradually forsook him. What I have been told was merely this; that not being so sharp as his countrymen, he allowed them to make a prey of him. In the end he gave up business, and found an asylum with his worthy son at Kibworth. A long old age it was; he survived to the age of 92.

My great-great grandfather Jennings was a clergyman, in what was then called Powisland, and a part of Wales; and was one of the noble 2000 who resigned their livings rather than violate conscience at the prompting of that treacherous bigot Lord Claren-

don. The loss was the heavier to Mr. Jennings from his cure being his own advowson. I know not what carried him to Kibworth, so remote from his native country, for he was a Welshman—but I believe he was the founder of the Academy afterwards carried on by his son. This son, the Rev. John Jennings, was a very industrious teacher, and a man of letters.....After the passing of the Toleration Act, he became the dissenting minister of Kibworth. His first wife was a beautiful young girl, only child of one of the principal members of his congregation. Seven months after marriage she produced a babe, small and puny, which died almost immediately. Puritan rigor was little disposed in such a case, to grant to a suspected offender the benefit of even the most reasonable doubt. An old hag of the congregation, gained or forced admittance to the bedside of the new mother, to tell her, weak and exhausted as she was, the evil thoughts of *all the world* on this occasion. The poor young creature wept

all the rest of the day, and died the next. When the widower married a second time, the father of her who had been 'done to death by slanderous tongues,' said to him, 'call your first daughter Jane, after my poor girl, and I will give her a *rood land*.' How much this means I know not, but his daughter, my grandmother, was named Jane, and had the land. Her husband sold it when they removed from Kibworth to Warrington.

My great grandmother, the second wife of Mr. Jennings, was Anna Letitia, one of the many daughters of Sir Francis Wingate of Harlington Grange, Beds., by the Lady Anne, daughter of Sir Arthur Annesley, first Earl of Anglesey, and Lord Privy Seal under Charles II. Her name of Anna, I suppose she bore in compliment to her mother; Letitia, was an appellation brought into the Wingate family long before. Lettice Wingate, a nun, is commemorated in the pedigree book at Harlington, as having taught her nephew to read.

The old family house,* on the most antique end of which, my uncle remembered a plate bearing the date 1396, was the seat of a family, Norman I presume, of the name of Belverge; bearing on their shield three pears *or* (bel verger) till it was conveyed by the marriage of an heiress at the end of the 14th century, to a Wingate of the neighbouring village of Sharpenhoe. Wingate of Harlington, is included in the list of gentry made by the Heralds' College on their visitation, held in the reign, and under the auspices of Henry VI; which intimates him to have belonged to the Lancastrian party. The master of the Grange was never Lord of the Manor, therefore only the second *great man* of Harlington; yet his estates appear to have been considerable. Edward Wingate held the exalted office of

* The house still stands; at present occupied by George Pearse, Esq., who married Elizabeth, the only child of Mrs. Aikin's brother, John Wingate Jennings, the last of the name. This lady, who never quitted her old home, died a few years ago at a ripe age in the house in which she was born, beloved and respected by all who knew her.

'Master of the Bears,' to Queen Elizabeth. Sir Francis, in his elaborate letter of declaration to the Lady Anne, still preserved, I think, values his estate at 1000 per annum, and promises to keep a coach and six. The Earl, her father, gave her several thousand pounds. Bishop Burnet writes of this noble lord, that he had sold himself so often that at length no party thought him worth buying. He seems indeed to have feathered his nest pretty well, but was certainly an able man. We may take comfort, roguery is not hereditary, folly often is.

Grand were the preparations made at poor Harlington for the reception of the bride. The hall and *state bedchamber* over it, were fitted up on the occasion. The chamber was hung with tapestry, 'disfiguring and representing' the judgment of Paris, and other classical stories; the bed was of crimson damask, richly adorned with fringe and gilding; there was a handsome Japan cabinet, heavy arm chairs, and toilet ornaments to match, and a dressing room

within; splendors which excited my youthful awe and veneration, decayed and faded as they were,—but as for Lady Anne, tradition says that she sat her down and cried when she saw to how poor a place she had been brought as her future home. Her husband looks in his portrait very good natured, but heavy enough—the Lady Anne—let us hope she was of a sweeter temper than she looks in her's. She was a stiff presbyterian, her husband a jolly episcopalian, who said somewhat bitterly, that when he was gone she would certainly turn his great hall into a conventicle. Perhaps this thought had set an edge on his zeal, when, in the character of a Justice of the Quorum, he committed John Bunyan to Bedford gaol for unlicensed preaching. The only memorable action of his life, as far as I am aware.

But that an old family mansion must absolutely have a ghost, in fact it would be almost as disgraceful to the race to be without one as to want a coat without arms, I would not be so undutiful to my great-great grandmother as to tell the tale, but it is a

matter of necessity, so here it is. The lady Anne had a friend who unknown to her husband had made up a purse, the contents of which she destined to be shared among her children by a former marriage. On her deathbed she entrusted to her this deposit. Lady Anne, I dare not say with what thoughts, she being then a widow, and hard pressed enough, *delayed* to deliver over the money. One night, she was startled by a mysterious rustling in a certain long, dark, crooked passage into which her chamber opened; the rustling—yes, she could not be mistaken—of a silk gown, the very gown of her departed friend. It passed on to a certain narrow door, at which *something* seemed to enter, and the rustling ceased. Her ladyship paid the money next day, and nothing was ever heard or seen more; but some people had an odd feeling as they passed that door, leading only to the china closet, within my memory.

A more favorable trait of Lady Anne has been preserved. She possessed two beautiful miniatures, evidently a pair; one

represented her brother, Lord Altham, the other a lady, so lovely in feature, and still more in expression, one was never weary of gazing upon it. Lady Anne was accustomed often to take it out of her cabinet and weep tenderly over it; so far her daughters could attest from their own knowledge, but she would never inform them whom it represented, or what had been her story. Lord Altham, worthy to shine amongst the courtiers of Charles II, had three wives living at the same time; the first of these deceived and unhappy ladies was probably his sister's friend; yes, it must have been her wrongs over which she shed these frequent tears; and shame at her brother's treachery and wickedness doubtless tied her tongue.

Sir Francis died in middle age, leaving his lady with three sons, and six ill portioned daughters. Some few notices have reached me of all the six sisters. Mr. Moore, the husband of the eldest, was a clergyman, very poor, very honest, and the simplest of the simple. He would some-

times borrow a trifle of his mother-in-law, giving her an acknowledgment in these cautious terms, 'I promise to pay, if I am able.' 'My dear' he once cried out to his wife, 'a great rude girl came and robbed our apple tree while I was in the garden.' 'And did you let her?' 'How could I help it? Neither could he help his sons going to ruin. Another sister married a Dr. Hay, a Scotch physician. She was accounted a wit, and one or two of her *good things* I have heard, but should be sorry to recite in the 'ears polite' of a younger generation.

The sons all possessed the estate in succession. The first dissipated more than his prudent brother was able to retrieve. The third, John, a retired naval captain, just managed to make both ends meet. He was long a widower, and as he had no surviving child, it was a matter of anxious speculation which nephew he would make his heir. Charles Moore, eldest nephew, chose to regard it as his right, and prepared himself for the enjoyment of the few ancestral acres by such a course of idleness, extravagance,

and folly, as determined his uncle never to put them at his mercy. For the opposite qualities he at length declared it to be his intention to leave the old place to my grandfather, Arthur Jennings.

By way of retaliation I suppose, for his persecution of Bunyan, two of the daughters of Sir Francis married dissenting ministers, not in his lifetime, however. One was Mrs. Norris, the other was Anna Letitia, my great grandmother. One died single, aunt Rachel, of whom all I know is that she had the honor to have Rachel, lady Russell, for her Godmother; the families being in some way related.*

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* She was niece to Lady Anglesey, and the Wingates seem to have taken advantage of the relationship to push their fortune, though without success, by the following passage in Lady Russell's Letters.

"We are told that Mr. Middleton is in a dying condition,—his place in the Prize Office is worth about 400 a year. My cousin lady Anne Wingate would be contented if it could be obtained for Sir Francis. Lord Bedford and myself would show our readiness to serve my Lady Anne and Sir Francis, and the more friends joyn will not recommend it less to my Lord Devonshire, if he can do anything in it. I have writ to him Lord Bedford's thoughts of Sir Francis; which are, that he is an understanding, honest, gentleman, and has almost

My great grandmother was left a rather young and slenderly provided widow, with four children, Arthur, John, Francis, and Jane, my grandmother Aikin. She continued to reside at Kibworth : Dr. Doddridge, her husband's successor as head of the academy, was boarded in her house. Her children were indebted to him for much early instruction, which contributed with their advantages of birth and connections to raise them in the estimation of their neighbours above the level of a narrow fortune. My grandmother was presented at court by a lady of the Annesley connection, no small distinction in those days. She was sprightly, not without personal charms, and had a natural talent for singing. The result of the whole was, that her honored tutor was moved to indite an elaborate epistle, still preserved, in which he labored to convince her, that it was actually possible

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exceeded any in this country in his zeal and activeness towards the present Government."
To Lord Devonshire, 1690.

* Dr. Doddridge's letter is in the appendix.

for a grave divine of thirty years of age to experience the passion of love for a little gentlewoman of fifteen. The converse of the problem he seems to have taken for granted; not so the young lady, who stedfastly refused to become the Eloise of such an Abelard. Arthur her eldest brother, was my grandfather, my elder brothers could a little remember him, but he died before my birth. I have often regretted it; all I ever heard of him was delightful. My father used to say he had as much of the milk of human kindness as ever man had, and had a rich vein of humor, and told a story admirably. He was short, broad-chested, and of extraordinary strength. His span was eleven inches, and he would say he feared no man if he could once get him within his *grip*. He would walk when a gay young man from London to Harlington,* six or

* The village of Harlington is very near the great chalk downs of Dunstable, at this time one of the hunting grounds of the famed Dick Turpin and his gang. One morning Mr. Jennings' own horse was found in the stable, heated, trembling, and covered with foam; evidently having been ridden all night. Another time Mrs. Jennings was going to town for the winter, and travelling

eight and thirty miles to a dance, and walk back next morning. He had the bright hazel eye of the Wingates.

His brother John, destined for a dissenting minister was the wit of Dr. Doddridge's academy, and the darling of his relations and friends. A diary of Mr. Merivale his fellow-student records several of the smart sayings and merry stories of 'Jack.' Soon after he had finished his education, he went to live in a kind of chaplain capacity with Mr. Coward, a wealthy merchant I believe, who left the fund which still bears his name, for the education of dissenting teachers. A chaplain, this zealous puritan appears not greatly to have needed, since he took upon himself the performance of the family devotions. On these occasions he would be

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over the downs towards evening (she always slept on the road) they perceived a horseman persistently keeping pace with them. This went on some time, till Mrs. Jennings got into such a state of alarm and nervousness that she could bear it no longer, and putting her head out of the carriage window, she called out, "If you want to rob us, *do!*" "Lord bless me madam," cried a familiar voice, "rob you! I am only John so and so, keeping up with the carriage for company."

carried out in prayer to very extraordinary lengths indeed, according to the reports of Uncle Jack, faithfully preserved by his contemporaries. He had once insured for a considerable sum a ship called the Mingen, which was lost. Accounting himself ill-treated by the Deity on the occasion, he thus remonstrated—'But O Lord! thou *nickedst* me in the Mingen.'

Let us now return to my grandfather Aikin. Among his fellow-students was Mr. Merivale afterwards a dissenting minister at Exeter, whose diary communicated to me by his grandson (the late John Herman Merivale one of the Judges in Bankruptcy,) is curiously illustrative of the simplicity of the age. 'He and Aikin,' he says, 'set out from London for the Academy on the same day. Aikin having two younger brothers to take to school, travelled by the wagon, but I did not choose it, for it would have cost half-a-guinea!' Therefore he walked by the side.

After quitting Doddridge's Academy, my grandfather went to the university of Aber-

deen, then I believe illustrated by a school of learned and able theologians, such as Lowman and the Fordyces who were casting off the fetters of Calvin. My grandfather settled at length in what was called low Arianism, which subsequently became, under his tuition, the system of the Warrington divines, almost without exception. That his University regarded him as an alumnus to be proud of, was evinced by its degree of D.D. conferred upon him at Warrington, not alone without solicitation but without notice. In fact to his humble and retiring temper, the distinction was actually distressing, and he would have been well pleased to shut up his diploma in a drawer, and say nothing about it to any one. He had just married and accepted the invitation of a congregation at Market Harborough, when an affection of the chest ascribed to a fall, compelled him to resign his pulpit, and look to tuition as his sole resource. A letter to his friend Merivale explains his circumstances with a charming simplicity. Twelve pounds per annum for board, lodging

and the instruction of such a man! But he had his reward in the attachment, the veneration, of his scholars; in the atmosphere of respect and admiration which everywhere surrounded him; and his gains were adequate to his humble wants, his modest wishes. He left behind him as the savings of his life, with some small additions probably on the side of his wife, about five-and twenty hundred pounds.

In my first visit to Liverpool, twenty years after my grandfather's death, I several times met with elderly or middle-aged gentlemen who showed me attentions I was at a loss to account for, till I found they all boasted of having been my grandfather's pupils. Not twenty years since a gentleman introduced himself with 'I was at your grandfather's funeral.'

It was his constant care never, even by inadvertence to do the smallest hurt to any human creature. To this principle he gave a last token of adherence in his positive direction not to be buried within the walls of the Meeting-house, but in the open

Churchyard. After resigning his tutorship, shortly before his death, he calmly said that he had now nothing to do either for this world or another.

A letter from his widow (Dr. Doddridge's Miss Jenny) is touching in its piety and resignation.

To Mrs. Barbauld. Jan. 1st, 1781.

My dear Child,

It is a considerable alleviation of the heavy stroke that is fallen upon me that I have children who were sensible of the worth of their excellent father, and I believe sincerely lament the loss of him, and tenderly sympathise with their afflicted mother, let us mingle our tears and pay that best tribute of honour and love to his memory, the imitating his virtues. I am indeed greatly afflicted, and the few remaining days of my pilgrimage will be sorrowful, oh! may it be that sorrow by which the heart is made better! may His gracious purpose be answered that I may have reason to say, it is good for me that I have been afflicted. Nor

would I ungratefully forget His past bounties, my whole life has been a life of mercies; my union with your dear father was a constant source of happiness; very few couples have lived so long together; peace and plenty crown'd our days, we saw our children brought up, saw them virtuous, esteemed, beloved, and comfortably settled in the world; and when increasing infirmities no longer permitted my dearest partner to labour in his Lord's vineyard, he was called to receive his reward, and has left a name behind him that will reflect an honor on his latest posterity. On his account we ought to rejoice, his constitution was so worn that had he continued longer, his sufferings would probably have been greater than his enjoyments, let us therefore say from our hearts, the Lord gave, the Lord has taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.

It would have been a soothing consolation if your poor father had been able to take such a last leave of us as his piety and love would have dictated, but alas! he was so

oppressed with the violence of his distemper, that I believe that though he was sensible he had not the command of his thoughts, and his asthma was so severe that he could scarce collect breath to utter a short sentence. Two or three times he pressed me to go to bed, and whenever I gave him anything said with his usual complaisance, 'thank you my dear,' and when I asked him if he would have Dr. Turner called in, said with some calmness, no, no; but gave no intimation that he was apprehensive of his approaching change. The few words I have mentioned were (in a manner) all he spoke during his short illness; t'is a satisfaction to me that I never left him from the time he was seized till I closed those eyes which were the light of my life. Your brother saw him expire, and was affected as a son ought to be; he and your sister have shewn me every attention and tenderness, and press me to live with them. I have not yet determined how I shall dispose of myself, but if upon mature consideration I have reason to think that it will be neither incon-

venient nor disagreeable to them, it seems the most eligible asylum I could chuse. Was I to continue in my present solitary situation, I believe I should sink under it. Pray for your poor mother, that I may attain to a calm submission to the divine will, and so live that I may again meet with the dear partner of my soul in that happy world where all tears shall be wiped away, and there shall be no more death.

I am ever your affectionate Mother,

JANE AIKIN.

Dr. and Mrs. Aikin had two children, Anna Letitia, afterwards Mrs. Barbauld, and her brother John, the writer and physician, four years younger than herself.

That quickness of apprehension by which she was distinguished shewed itself from her earliest infancy. Her mother says in a letter, in which after gently bewailing the backwardness of her grand-children, Edmund and Lucy, both under four, 'I once indeed knew a little girl who was as eager to learn as her instructors could be to teach

her, and who at two years old could read sentences and little stories in her *wise book*, roundly, without spelling; and in half a year more could read as well as most women; but I never knew such another, and I believe never shall." The earliest event she used to speak of as remembering, was the stir in the family caused by the news of the entrance of the Pretender's Army into England in 1745, she then being three years old. Kibworth being in the high road to London, the question of their immediate removal was anxiously discussed, till the news of the defeat of the rebels put an end to their alarms.

To resume Miss Aikin's narrative.—"Her mother, a woman of sense and a gentlewoman said, that there was no alternative for a girl brought up in a boy's school, between being a prude and hoyden. She preferred the first, rightly, no doubt, if the case must be so, but it was owing to this training, I presume, that Mrs. Barbauld never appeared at her ease, nor felt so, as she has often told me, in general society.

Ceremonious she was, and humble to strangers to a degree which sometimes provoked one. Strangers would sometimes say they could not be afraid of her, she was so unassuming, which was true. In her youth, great bodily activity, and a lively spirit struggled hard against the tight rein which held her. London cousins wondered sometimes at the gymnastic feats of the country lass. It was these perhaps, added to the brightness of her lilies and roses which sunk so deep into the heart of Mr. Haynes, a rich farmer of Kibworth. He followed this damsel of fifteen to Warrington and obtained a private audience of her father, and begged his consent to make her his wife. My grandfather answered that his daughter was then walking in the garden, and he might go and ask her himself. With what grace the farmer pleaded his cause I know not; but at length out of all patience at his unwelcome importunities, she ran nimbly up a tree which grew by the garden wall, and let herself down into the lane beyond, leaving her suitor '*planté là*.' The poor man

went home disconsolate ; he lived and died a bachelor ; though he was never known to purchase any other book whatever, 'the works of Mrs. Barbauld' splendidly bound adorned his parlour to the end of his days. This whole story I heard from an old servant of the family, and my aunt who was present, did not contradict it in a single word.

My father had a notion that her deportment alarmed young men, and rather struck them 'with amazement and blank awe' than won their hearts, but this was surely a mistake, I know three or four of her lovers who never ceased to regard her with affection as well as admiration. Her conversation in her happiest moods had a charm inexpressible ; wit, playful wit, tempered with true feminine softness, and the gentle dignity of a high mind, unwont to pour forth its hidden treasures on all demands.

She observed to me once, that she had never been placed in a situation which suited her. It was true, unless the bright years of Warrington might be excepted. She had then her father, her brother, the

academic body, and a crowd of admirers. But the manner of her home savored no doubt of puritanical rigor. She and her mother, neat, punctual, strict, though of cultivated mind and polished manners, were thoroughly uncongenial.

The removal of her father, Dr. Aikin, to Warrington as Theological tutor to the newly founded Academy (or rather college) there, took place when she was just fifteen. Her person is thus described at this time. 'She was possessed of great beauty, distinct traces of which she retained to the latest period of her life. Her person was slender, her complexion exquisitely fair with the bloom of perfect health; her features regular and elegant, and her dark blue eyes beamed with the light of wit and fancy.' The Warrington Academy belongs now so entirely to the past, that a short account of it seems almost necessary here; and I am happy to be allowed to make use of a most interesting and lively sketch read by Mr. Henry A. Bright of Liverpool to the Historic Society of Lancashire and

Cheshire—'In the year 1753 the failure or decay of the several Academies belonging to the English Presbyterian body caused no inconsiderable anxiety to the more thoughtful and earnest among the liberal dissenters. Where could those ministers be educated in theology unshackled by creed and doctrine? On none did these questions press with greater weight than on John Seddon, the young minister at Warrington. The idea of founding a new Academy was never dropped until it had been carried out in action. How he worked, and wrote, and explained, and begged! He is never discouraged, though his discouragements are innumerable. He is never down-hearted though his friends are always suggesting difficulties and prophesying evil.....A circular was sent round signed by Daniel Bayley (of Manchester), John Lees, afterwards Sir Caryll Worsley, and seven others; and in June, 1757, the first general meeting was held. Lord Willoughby of Parham* was appoint-

*His nephew who was one of the first pupils at

ed President. Sir H. Hoghton, Messrs. Heywood and Percival, and other Manchester and Liverpool gentlemen subscribed to take houses in Warrington and appoint tutors for the new Academy. 'The tutors will take boarders into their houses at £15 per annum for those who had two months vacation, and £18 for those who had no vacation.' These terms are however exclusive of tea, washing, fire and candles. The tutors were Dr. Taylor of Norwich, author of the Hebrew Concordance, whose learning was so generally acknowledged that all the English and Welch Bishops and Archbishops, with but four exceptions, were subscribers to the work. Mr. Holt was mathematical tutor, and Dr. Aikin languages and literature, and after Dr. Taylor's death, divinity; Dr. Priestley, Dr. Enfield, and the Rev. Gilbert Wakefield were afterwards appointed. 'The tutors in my time,' says Dr. Priestley, 'lived in the most perfect harmony.

Warrington, was afterwards 17th and last Lord Willoughby of Parham; the last also of the old Presbyterian nobility of England.

We drank tea together every Saturday, and our conversation was equally instructive and pleasing,—we were all Arians, and the only subject of much consequence on which we differed respected the doctrine of the Atonement, concerning which Dr. Aikin held some obscure notions.'

In the letter of invitation from Mr. Seddon to Dr. Aikin at Kibworth, one passage is curious, as showing what travelling in England was a hundred years ago. 'Mr. Holland has given us some reason to hope y^{t} you will come over to Warrington in the Easter week, in order to take a view of y^{r} future situation; if so, give me leave to recomend y^{e} following plan. I'll suppose you set out from Kibworth on Sunday afternoon; as you intend travelling in post-chaises, you'l easily reach Loughborough, or perhaps Derby that night, y^{e} next night you may come to Offerton, w^{h} is about a mile short of Stockport, where I am with Mrs. Seddon, and will be ready to receive you and wait upon you to Warrington; you will do well to come prepared for riding, for you

will not meet with any carriages at Stockport; nor are the roads to Warrington proper for them; when you get to a place called Bullock's Smithy, about two miles short of Stockport, enquire for Offerton. Mr. Roe, late of Birmingham, now lives there; and we shall be glad to see you. If you'l write to me time enough, and be particular enoh in your time, I will endeavour to meet you with my own chaise, or send a servant for that purpose.'

Besides the students, distinguished strangers came to Warrington to consult the tutors, or visit the students. Howard the Philanthropist came in order that the younger Aikin might revise his MSS and correct his proofs. Roscoe of Liverpool came, and first learned to care for Botany from his visits to the Warrington Botanical Gardens. Pennant the Naturalist; Currie, the biographer of Burns; and many a Presbyterian minister, eminent then, though now forgotten—were among the visitors to the Athens of our county. But there were other attractions besides the tutors and

their philosophy. 'We have a knot of lasses just after your own heart' writes Mrs. Barbauld, then Miss Aikin, to her friend Miss Belsham 'as merry, blithe and gay, as you could wish; and very smart and clever —two of them are the Miss Rigbys. We have a West Indian family too, that I think you would like; a young couple who seem intended for nothing but mirth, frolic, and gaiety.' It was a sad day for Warrington when Miss Lizzy Rigby became Mrs. Bunny, and Miss Sally Rigby was wooed and wedded by Dr. Parry of Bath:—it was sadder still when the lively West Indian had to slip away from his creditors and leave Warrington for ever—saddest of all was it when 'our poetess' herself, after winning the hearts of half the students, some one or two of whom lived sighing and single for her sake--when she too followed the Miss Rigbys' unfortunate example, and was carried off to Palgrave.' From difficulties in the management of this Academy however, and the deaths of Dr. Taylor, Dr. Aikin, and Mr. Seddon, and the want of sufficient discipline,

—the hopes of the Trustees were but partially realized, and the Academy was closed in 1786, after a useful but precarious existence of nine and twenty years. A College at Manchester was established to which the Warrington Trustees transferred their library—It then removed to York, and has now removed to London. It still retains the old Warrington characteristics of a freedom quite unshackled, a fearless daring in the cause of truth, and a clear and penetrating glance into the deepest problems of theology. An extract from a letter from Lucy Aikin to Mr. Bright will close the subject. 'I have often thought with envy of that society. Neither Oxford nor Cambridge could boast of brighter names in literature or science than several of these dissenting tutors—humbly content in an obscure town, and on a scanty pittance, to cultivate in themselves, and communicate to a rising generation, those mental acquirements and moral habits which are their own exceeding great reward. They and theirs lived together like one large family,

and in the facility of their intercourse they found large compensation for its deficiency in luxury and splendor—such days are past —whom have we now 'content with science in a humble shed?'

It was at Warrington in the year 1773 that the 1st vol. of Miss Aikin's Poems was published. They had an immediate success. The reviews praised, letters of congratulation poured in—from old friends, —from entire strangers. Two of these have been preserved, from Dr. Priestley, whose excellent wife was her dearest friend —and from Mrs. Montagu.

Leeds, 13th June 1769.

Dear Miss Aikin,

You will be surprised when I tell you I write this on the behalf of *Pascal Paoli* and the brave *Corsicans*, but it is strictly true. Mr. Turner of Wakefield, who says he reads your poems not with admiration but astonishment, insists upon my writing to you, to request that a copy of your poem called *Corsica* may be sent to

Mr. Boswell, with permission to publish it for the benefit of those noble islanders. He is confident that it cannot fail greatly to promote their interest now that a subscription is open for them, by raising a generous ardor in the cause of liberty, and admiration of their glorious struggles in its defence. Its being written by a *lady*, he thinks, will be a circumstance very much in their favour, and that of the poem; but there is no occasion for Mr. Boswell to be acquainted with your name, unless it be your own choice some time hence. I own I entirely agree with Mr. Turner in these sentiments, and therefore hope Miss Aikin will not refuse so reasonable a request, which will at the same time lay a great obligation on friends in England, and contribute to the relief of her own heroes in Corsica. I consider that you are as much a general as Tyrtæus was, and your poems (which I am confident are much better than his ever were) may have as great an effect as his. They may be the *coup de grace* to the French troops in that island, and *Paoli*, who reads English, will cause

it to be printed in every history in that renowned island.

Without any joke. I wish you would comply with this request. In this case you have only to send a corrected copy to us at Leeds, or to Mr. Johnson* in London, and I will take care to introduce it to the notice of Mr. Boswell by means of Mr. Vaughan or Mrs. Macaulay, or some other friends of liberty and Corsica in London. The sooner this is done the better. Mr. Turner regrets very much that it was not done some time ago.

I shall not tell you what I think of your poems, for more than twenty reasons, one of which is that I am not able to express it. We are now all expectation at the opening of every packet from Warrington.

My piece on Perspective is nearly ready for the press. Come and see me before it is quite printed, and I will engage to teach you the whole art and mystery of it in a few hours. If you come a month after, I may know no more about the matter than any

* The publisher of St. Paul's Churchyard.

body else. I am about to make a bolder push than ever for the *pillory*, the *King's Bench Prison*, or something worse. Tell Mr. Aikin he may hug himself that I have no connexion with the Academy. On Monday next Mr. Turner and I set out on a visit to the Archdeacon at Richmond.

With all our compliments to all your worthy family,

I am, with the greatest cordiality,
Your friend and admirer,
J. PRIESTLEY.

Hill Street, Feb. 22nd, 1774.

Dear Madam,

If I had not been prevented by indisposition from making my immediate acknowledgments, you would have been assured before this time of my sense of the favour done to me by your polite letter, and the great pleasure I feel in the opening a more intimate correspondence with Miss Aikin. As the world is in general too much disposed, you are certainly obliged to every man who is not jealous, and every woman

who is not envious of your talents; that I did not withhold the praise that is due to them gives me some merit with you, but that you may not over rate the obligation I will confess that I act from a perfect and long experience, that it is more to my personal happiness and advantage to indulge the love and admiration of excellence, than to cherish a secret envy of it. To this disposition I owe friendships which have been the happiness and honour of my life. You must not expect to find in me, the talents which adorn the friends around me, I shall not think myself disgraced in your opinion if you find something in me to love, tho' nothing to admire. The genuine effect of polite letters is to inspire candour, a social spirit, and gentle manners; to teach a disdain of frivolous amusements, injurious censoriousness, and foolish animosities. To partake of these advantages and to live under the benign empire of the muses, on the conditions of a naturalized subject, who, not having any inherent right to a share of office, credit, or authority, seeks nothing but

the protection of the society is all I aim at. I am much pleased with the hope you give me of adding so valuable an ornament to my circle of Friends as Miss Aikin. I always wish to find great virtues where there are great talents, and to love what I admire, so, to tell you the truth, I made many enquiries into your character as soon as I was acquainted with your works, and it gave me infinite pleasure to find the moral character returned the lustre it received from the mental accomplishments. Your essays have made me still more intimately acquainted with the turn of your mind, more sincerely your friend, and more warmly your admirer. I dare not repeat, to you, what I have said of them to others; what might, to your modest diffidence, have the appearance of flattery would set me at a distance from your friendship to which I aspire. I hope whenever you come to London you will come before the Spring is far advanced, for I usually leave London early in May. Bad health, and a variety of engagements make me a remiss correspondent, but I shall at any

time be very happy to hear from you, and happier still if you can suggest anything I can do for your service. If any work appears in the Literary World which you would wish to have convey'd to you, favour me at any time with your commands. Your style is so classical, that I imagine that your Father's Study chiefly abounds with old books, if anything new excites your curiosity let me have the pleasure of conveying it to you. With great esteem,

I am Dear Madam,
Your most obedient and
sincere humble Servant,
Eliz. Montagu.

I made my friend Gen. Paoli very happy by presenting him with your Poems. The muses crown virtue when fortune refuses to do it.

After passing through four editions within twelve months, this first volume was followed, ere the end of the year, by another, in which she and her brother joined: the title was 'Miscellaneous Pieces in Prose,

by J. and A. L. Aikin.' These likewise met with much notice and admiration, and have been several times reprinted.

Having thus successfully laid the foundation of a literary reputation, she might have gone on to longer and more important works, had not an event, of the greatest consequence in all women's lives, now taken place which subjected her to new influences, new duties, and station in life.

Shortly before this time, there came as a pupil to the Academy a young Frenchman of the name of Rochemont Barbauld, descended from a family of French Protestants. During the persecutions of Louis XIV, his grandfather, then a boy, was carried on board a ship inclosed in a cask and conveyed to England; and on the marriage of one of the daughters of George II to the Elector of Hesse, was appointed his chaplain, and attended her to Cassel.

At this place his son Rochemont was born. On the breaking up of the household of the Electress he returned to England with his father, who destined him for the Church,

but somewhat unadvisedly sent him for instruction to the dissenting Warrington Academy; and from the change of opinions formed there, he felt obliged to renounce his expectations from the Church, though by doing so he raised the further obstacle of want of fortune and profession to the objections already felt by Miss Aikin's parents to his union with their daughter.

Lucy Aikin speaks in strong but no doubt appropriate terms of this event; which, consideration towards surviving members of the Barbauld family, prevented her saying when she first wrote the life of her aunt.

"Her attachment to Mr. Barbauld was the illusion of a romantic fancy—not of a tender heart. Had her true affections been early called forth by a more genial home atmosphere, she would never have allowed herself to be caught by crazy demonstrations of amorous rapture, set off with theatrical French manners, or have conceived of such exaggerated passion as a safe foundation on which to raise the sober structure of domestic happiness. My father ascribed that

ill-starred union in great part to the baleful influence of the 'Nouvelle Heloise,' Mr. B. impersonating St. Preux. She was informed by a true friend that he had experienced one attack of insanity, and was urged to break off the engagement on that account. —'Then' answered she, 'if I were now to disappoint him, he would certainly go mad.' To this there could be no reply; and with a kind of desperate generosity she rushed upon her melancholy destiny. It should however in justice be said, that a more upright, benevolent, generous or independent spirit than Mr. Barbauld's did not exist, as far as his malady would permit; his moral character did honor to her choice, but he was liable to fits of insane fury, frightful in a schoolmaster. Her sufferings with such a husband, who shall estimate? Children this pair seemed immediately to have despaired of. My brother Charles, born only one year after their marriage, was bespoken by them almost directly, they took him home with them before he was two years old—she enjoyed in his dutiful affection—

in the charms of his delightful disposition —his talents and his accomplished mind, her pride, her pleasure, the best solace of her lonely age. Mrs. Barbauld's indolence was a standing subject of regret and reproach with the admirers of her genius —but those who blamed her, little knew the daily and hourly miseries of her home; —they could not compute the amount of hindrances proceeding from her husband's crazy habits, and the dreadful apprehensions with which they could not fail to inspire her.

At length the blow fell—Mr. B's insanity became manifest, undeniable, and it took the unfortunate form of a quarrel with his wife. Well for her that she had the protection of an opposite neighbour in her brother! We were all of us constantly on the watch as long as she persisted in occupying the same house with the lunatic. Her life was in perpetual danger. Then shone forth the nobleness of her spirit. She had a larger share than any woman I ever knew of the great quality of courage—courage both

physical and moral. She was willing to expose herself to really frightful danger from the madman's rage, rather than allow him to be irritated by necessary restraint. When all was over and this miserable chapter of her history finally closed, her genius reasserted its claims. Her best poems, her noble, though not appreciated, 1811—all those evincing a tenderness she had never before been known to possess,—bear date from her widowhood."

Unconscious of the future miseries of her life, Mrs. Barbauld shortly after her marriage prepared to accompany her husband to the village of Palgrave in Suffolk, where he had accepted the charge of a dissenting congregation, and opened a boys' school. Before they had determined upon this plan Mrs. Montagu wrote to propose to her to become the Principal of a kind of Ladies' College which she wished to establish, and in these days it is curious to read in Mrs. Barbauld's answer the reasons she gives for declining the offer. "A kind of Academy for ladies" she says, "where they are to be taught in a regular manner the various branches of science, appears to me better calculated to form such characters as the *Précieuses* or *Femmes Savantes* than good wives or agreeable companions. The best way for a

woman to acquire knowledge is from conversation with a father or brother, and by such a course of reading as they may recommend, perhaps you may think that having myself stepped out of the bounds of female reserve in becoming an author, it is with an ill grace I offer these sentiments —but my situation has been peculiar, and would be no rule for others. I should likewise object to the age proposed—geography, languages, &c. are best learned from about nine to thirteen. I should have little hopes of cultivating a love of knowledge in a young lady of fifteen who came to me ignorant and uncultivated: it is too late then to begin to learn. The empire of the passions is coming on—those attachments begin to be formed, which influence the happiness of future life—the care of a mother alone can give suitable attention to this important period. The ease and grace of society; the duties in their own family,—to their friends, the detail of domestic economy—lastly their behaviour to the other half of their

species, who then begin to court their notice —these are the accomplishments which a young woman has to learn till she is married or fit to be so; and surely these are not to be learned in a school: my next reason is that I am not at all fit for the task. I have seen a good deal of the education of boys, but in a girls' school I should be quite a novice. I never was at one myself, I have not even the advantage of sisters; indeed for the early part of my life, I conversed little with my own sex. In the village where I was there were none to converse with; and this I am sensible has given me an awkwardness about common things which would make me peculiarly unfit for the education of girls. I could not judge of their music, their dancing; and if I pretended to correct their air, they might be tempted to smile at my own; for I know myself to be remarkably deficient in gracefulness of person, in my air and manner—I am sensible the common schools are upon a very bad plan, and believe I could project a better—but I could not execute it."

The rapid and uninterrupted success of the school was no doubt partly owing to Mrs. Barbauld's name; and Mr. Barbauld's county connections brought them several sons of noblemen and gentlemen of fortune. Mrs. B. threw herself heart and soul into the work. She kept all the accounts (still extant) of the school and their private purse. She wrote charming lectures on History and Geography, and took the entire charge of a class of little boys. The first Lord Denman, Sir William Gell, Dr. Sayers, and William Taylor of Norwich, both well-known writers, were among these. For them and her nephew Charles she wrote her 'Early Lessons' and 'Hymns in Prose.' Dr. Johnson and Mr. Fox were both pleased to express their disapproval of her wasting her talents in writing books for children,* but, practically employed in education as she then was, she felt the entire want of elementary books fit to put into their hands, and naturally was led to try to supply it. Her preface to the

* See Boswell's Life of Johnson, and Recollections of C. J. Fox by Mr. Rogers.

Early Lessons first written for her little Charles explains this.

"This little publication was made for a particular child, but the public is welcome to the use of it. It was found that amidst the multitude of books professedly written for children, there is not one adapted to the comprehension of a child from two to three years old. A grave remark or a connected story however simple is above his capacity, and *nonsense* is always below it, for folly is worse than ignorance. Another defect is the want of *good paper*, a *clear and large type*, and large spaces. Those only who have actually taught young children can be sensible how necessary these assistances are. The eye of a child cannot catch a small obscure ill-formed word amidst a number of others all equally unknown. To supply these deficiencies is the object of this book. The task is humble, but not mean, for to lay the first stone of a noble building and to plant the first idea in a human mind can be no dishonor to any hand."

Of the 'Hymns in Prose for Children,'

perhaps the best known of all her writings, she says in her preface her "peculiar object was to impress devotional feelings as early as possible on the infant mind—to impress them, by connecting religion with a variety of sensible objects, with all that he sees, all he hears, all that affects his young mind with wonder and delight; and thus by deep, strong, and permanent associations, to lay the best foundation for practical devotion in future life." That this end was accomplished, the numerous editions, even to the present time, of this charming little work, fully shows.

To relieve their minds as much as possible during this busy life, Mr. and Mrs. Barbauld always spent their winter vacation in London, and took some journey in the summer, a few extracts from the letters she regularly wrote to her brother are here given.

London, Jan., 1784.

"Well my dear brother, here we are in this busy town, nothing in which (the sight of friends excepted) has given us so much

pleasure as the sight of the balloon exhibiting in the Pantheon, it is sixteen feet one way and seventeen another. When set loose from the weight, it mounts to the top of that magnificent dome with such an easy motion as puts one in mind of Milton's line, "rose like an exhalation".....Next to the balloon, Miss Burney is the object of public curiosity. I had the pleasure of meeting her yesterday. She is a very unaffected sweet and pleasing young lady—but you, now I think of it, are a Goth, and have not read Cecilia. Read it, read it, for shame!.....

I begin to be giddy with the whirl of London, and feel my spirits flag. There are so many drawbacks, from hair dressers, bad weather, and fatigue, that it requires strong health greatly to enjoy being abroad.

We are got into the visiting way here, which I do not consider quite as an idle employment, because it leads to connections, but the hours are intolerably late; the other day at Mrs. Chapone's, none of the party but ourselves was come at a quarter to eight,

and the first lady that arrived said she hurried away from dinner without waiting for coffee. There goes a story of the Duchess of Devonshire, that she said to a tradesman, 'call on me to-morrow morning at four,' and that the honest man knocked the family up at day-break. Last week we met the American Bishops at Mr. Vaughan's, —if bishops they may be called—without title, without diocese, and without lawn sleeves. I wonder our bishops will consecrate them, for they have made very free of the Common Prayer, and have left out two Creeds out of three.....

I have been much pleased with the poems of the Scottish Ploughman, (Burns). His Cotter's Saturday Night has much the same merit as the Schoolmistress; and the Daisy, and the Mouse, are charming. The Eton Boys have published a periodical which they say is clever.* Dr. Price has a letter from Mr. Howard dated Amsterdam; he says the Emperor gave him a long audience. A pasquinade was fixed upon the gates of the

* The Philanthropist.

lunatic hospital in Vienna, 'Josephus, ubicumque secundus, hìc primus.'

The King, I heard, was playing at drafts with Dr. Willis, and having got a man to the top, the Dr. asked 'if he would not *crown his king*.' 'No' said his Majesty, 'for I think a king the most miserable man on earth.'*.....

Charles is losing his hair, (after a fever) I believe I ought to have the rest shaved, but it is such a frightful thing to see a boy in a wig. Do you remember some of my father's scholars in wigs? I do, and coat lappets set out with buckram. Well, I hope we do improve in taste.....

What have you seen, you will say, in London? Why in the first place Miss More's new play which fills the house very well and is pretty generally liked. Miss More is I assure you very much the ton, and

* Mrs. Barbauld always felt respect and attachment to the King, partly perhaps from being exactly of the same age. Her writings seem to have become known at Court, as her mother, in one of her letters, says "Miss Belsham has heard that Her Majesty (Queen Charlotte) has declared, that if she is an enthusiast in anything it is in admiration of Mrs. Barbauld."

moreover has got 600*l* or 700*l* by her play. I wish I could produce one every two winters, we would not keep school. I cannot say however that I cried so much at 'Percy,' as I laughed at the 'School for Scandal' which is positively the wittiest play I remember to have seen, and I am sorry to add, one of the most immoral and licentious. In principles, I mean, for in language it is very decent.

Mrs. Montagu, not content with being the Queen of literature and elegant society, sets up for the Queen of fashion and splendour. She is building a very fine house, has a fine service of plate, dresses, visits more than ever, and I am afraid will be as much the woman of the world as the philosopher. I heard much of the Astronomer,* who has discovered three hundred new stars and a new planet or comet. He was a piper in a Hessian regiment, and has improved telescopes to an astonishing degree. He has sat they say for twenty-four hours, rubbing and polishing his spectrum, and been

* Herschel.

fed by the attentions of others. We are reading in idle moments, Boswell's long expected life of Johnson. It is like going to Ranelagh, you meet all your acquaintances; but it is a base and a mean thing to bring thus every idle word into judgement; the judgement of the public. Johnson, I think, was far from a great character, he was continually sinning against his conscience, and then afraid of going to Hell for it. A Christian, and a man of the town; a philosopher, and a bigot; acknowledging life to be miserable, and making it more miserable through fear of death; professing great distaste to the country, and neglecting the urbanity of towns; a Jacobite and pensioned; acknowledged to be a giant in literature, and yet we do not trace him as we do Locke, or Rousseau or Voltaire in his influence on the opinion of the times. We cannot say, Johnson first opened this view of thought, led the way to this discovery, or this turn of thinking. In his style he is original, and there we can track his imitators.—In short, he rather seems to me to

be one of those who have shone in the belles lettres, rather than what he is held out to be by many, an original and deep genius in investigation. .....

Mrs. Montagu, who entertains all the aristocrats of France, had invited a Marchioness De Boufflers and her daughter to dinner —after making her wait till six, the Marchioness came and made an apology for her daughter, that just as she was going to dress she was seized with a 'dégoût momentané du monde,' and could not wait upon her.

Mr. Brand Hollis has sent me an American poem, a regular epic in twelve books—The Conquest of Canaan—but I hope I need not read it. Not that the poetry is bad, if the subject were more interesting. What had he to do to make Joshua his hero, when he had Washington of his own growth.

Mr. Howard is setting out upon another tour to the north-west of England; he looks well and happy and lively; he has been south as far as Moscow, where he says that they live in all the Asiatic magnificence. He told me of a Russian nobleman who has

built a convent, where he has educated at his own expense 600 young ladies, by whose means he hopes to polish the Empire."

A further notice of this great man occurs in a letter about this time, in a letter from Mrs. Barbauld's mother in Warrington. "Mr. Howard left us yesterday to the great regret of all who had the happiness of his acquaintance, he is indeed an astonishing person; where could another be found who would incur the expense, fatigue and danger which he has done, in visiting three times over every prison in England, besides many in foreign parts; where, one who has brought his appetites under such subjection as to be able to live almost without eating? He takes nothing but a dish of tea or coffee and a mouthful of bread and butter till night; and then eats only a few potatoes, and drinks nothing but water, and yet he never seems to want either spirits or strength, and is a most lively entertaining companion." He once told them that wishing, whilst in Paris, to see the Bastille, he made inquiries for that purpose, and

finding it quite impossible to obtain an order, he determined to try without one. Accordingly he boldly drove up to the gates in a handsome carriage and four, with several servants in livery, dressed himself like a gentleman of the court. Stepping out of the carriage, with an air of authority, he desired to be shown over the building. The officials, taken by surprise, and never doubting from his deportment his right to be obeyed, permitted him to examine everything he chose. A further short account of him by Lucy Aikin may be introduced here—it was written late in her life to a young relation.

"Few, very few, survive to the present time to say, I remember Howard the ever memorable philanthropist—I have seen him, his image is still before my eyes— a small man, brisk in his movements, with an expressive countenance—extremely fond of children and entertaining them with narratives fitted to their understanding. I was indeed no more than eight years old when his high career was arrested by death, on a

far distant coast, but immediately before embarking on his last hazardous journey, he had passed some time where my father then resided, at Yarmouth in Norfolk, occupied in preparing for the press, with his assistance, his concluding volume on Lazarettoes, Prisons, and Hospitals. He loved to unbend at times from this occupation, to forget for a few moments in domestic intercourse the scenes of distress and horror which he had encountered in the fulfilment of his high mission, and which he viewed it as a sacred duty to expose to public notice. The society of my mother was peculiarly acceptable to him. Her step-mother was a lady of the Whitbread family, with which Mr. Howard was closely connected both by blood and friendly intercourse, and from this circumstance she had enjoyed from her tenderest years, the privilege of knowing and revering him, whilst her strictness of principle, her steady conduct, and the whole cast of her serene and amiable character, had been peculiarly adapted to win his esteem and affection.

Both in his frequent visits to London, where Arthur Jennings, my grandfather, usually lived, and afterwards in Bedfordshire, where he had inherited a small family estate at Harlington, within a few miles of his own property at Cardington, Mr. Howard had many opportunities of cultivating this family connection, and I conceive this to have been the channel through which my father, the nephew as well as the son-in-law of Mr. Jennings, was introduced to him. It had been the irreparable misfortune of Mr. Howard, owing to the narrow and sordid notions of ignorant guardians, who placed him under an utterly incompetent schoolmaster, never to obtain the power of writing correctly his own language. On this account he had always found it desirable to obtain literary assistance, in giving to the world the valuable matter of his works.

It was under my father's superintendence that his previous volumes had issued from the Warrington Press, and he was now for the last time imparting a precious record of his unparalleled exertions to one who enter-

ed heart and soul into his objects, and honored himself almost beyond all human beings."

Eleven years spent in teaching left Mrs. Barbauld, as well as her husband, so much exhausted and out of health, that they gave up their school at the end of that time, in 1785; and after a year spent on the continent and another in London, fixed themselves at Hampstead, where, besides taking one or two pupils, Mr. Barbauld accepted an invitation to perform duty at a small chapel, for which a larger building has now been substituted, and of which the Rev. Dr. Sadler is the minister.

Mrs. Barbauld describes the place in a letter to her brother;

"Hampstead is certainly the pleasantest village about London. The mall of the place, a kind of terrace, which they call *Prospect Walk*, commands a most extensive and varied view over Middlesex and Berkshire, in which is included, besides many inferior places, the majestic Windsor and lofty Harrow, which last is so conspicuously

placed that you know King James called it 'God's visible Church upon earth.' Hampstead and Highgate are mutually objects to each other, and the road between them is delightfully pleasant, lying along Lord Mansfield's fine woods, and the Earl of Southampton's *ferme ornée*. Lady Mansfield and Lady Southampton, I am told, are both admirable dairy-women, and so jealous of each other's fame in that particular, that they have had many heart-burnings, and have once or twice been very near a serious falling-out, on the dispute which of them could make the greatest quantity of butter from such a number of cows. On observing the beautiful smoothness of the turf in some of the fields about this place, I was told, the gentlemen to whom they belonged had them rolled like a garden plot.

I imagine we shall stay here till pretty late in the autumn, but if we enjoy the sunny gleams, we shall likewise endure many a cutting blast, for I think, except Avignon, this is the most windy place I ever was in.

As we have no house, we are not visited except by those with whom we have connections, but few as they are, they have filled our time with a continual round of company, we have not been six days alone. This is a matter I do not altogether wish, for they make very long tea drinking afternoons, and a whole long afternoon is really a piece of life. However they are very kind and civil. I am trying to get a little company in a more improving way, and have made a party with a young lady to read Italian together.

I pity the young ladies of Hampstead, there are several very agreeable ones. One gentleman in particular has five tall marriageable daughters, and not a single young man is to be seen in the place, but of widows and old maids such a plenty."

The village of Hampstead was then even more secluded than its distance from town seemed to warrant, the hill apparently being considered almost inaccessible. In a diary kept by Mr. Barbauld, he frequently speaks of being prevented going to town by the

state of the roads; and the passengers by the stage coach were always required to walk up the hill. Mrs. B. in a letter to Dr. Aikin describes the house they afterwards took as "standing in the high road at the entrance of the village quite surrounded by fields." The house still stands—the one immediately above Rosslyn Terrace—but the fields have alas, disappeared.

Mrs. Barbauld found many excellent and kind friends in this place. Mrs. Joanna Baillie, Mr. Hoare, and Mr. and Mrs. Carr of Frognal were some of the most intimate; with the last large family she remained on affectionate terms to the end of her life. Mr. Carr, then Solicitor to the Excise, was always ready to give her his valuable legal advice, and help; and the eldest daughter, afterwards married to the Rt. Hon. Dr. Lushington, was her peculiar favorite.

Joanna Baillie and her sister had lately established themselves also in a house at Hampstead, in which for the next half century they received all the choicest society England could boast—Mrs. Barbauld writes

--"I have received great pleasure lately from the representation of De Montfort, a tragedy which you probably read half a year ago in a volume entitled 'A series of Plays on the Passions.' I admired it then, but little dreamed I was indebted for my entertainment to a young lady of Hampstead whom I visited, and who came to Mr. Barbauld's Chapel all the while with as innocent a face as if she had never written a line. The play is admirably acted by Mrs. Siddons and Kemble, and is finely written, with great purity of sentiment, beauty of diction, strength and originality of character; but it is open to criticism—I cannot believe such a hatred natural. The affection between the brother and sister is beautifully touched, and as far as I know, quite new. The play is somewhat too good for the present taste."

At Hampstead Mrs. Barbauld wrote several of her prose Essays, and contributed to Dr. Aikin's popular little work of "Evenings at Home"—of which however only fourteen of the ninety-nine pieces are her's. Also a poem addressed to Mr.

Wilberforce on the rejection of the "Bill for abolishing the Slave Trade." Mrs. Hannah More acknowledged a copy of the poem as follows.

Cowslip Green, July, 1791.

My dear Madam,

Sickness and a variety of perplexing circumstances have thrown me so much out of the way of seeing you, that I hardly feel myself intitled to any mark of kindness from you. But had I seen your incomparable Poem by *accident*, and had it *not* come to me endeared as your gift, I should not have been able to have withheld writing to you to express my delight, my gratitude, my admiration. I cannot tell you how many times I have read it. I really had begun to pray (as I told the excellent person to whom you have addressed it) that my poetical enthusiasm was quite dead, but I find that like another idol it was only gone a journey or was asleep, and that it can be awakened at any time by such verses as you have sent me. I thank you for writing so

well, for writing on a subject so near my heart, and for addressing it to one so every way worthy of your highest esteem. I could not forbear repeating to him part of the animated description of the union of barbarity and voluptuousness in the West Indian woman, and he did full justice to this striking picture.* He is now upon a visit to me, and I wish I could tempt Mr. Barbauld and you to indulge me with your company.....you would find quiet, pleasing picturesque scenery, a few books and a great deal of friendship.

I hardly know how to enclose the trifling verses within. I wrote them in a playful

---

*Lo! where reclined, pale Beauty courts the breeze
Diffused on sofas of voluptuous ease;
With anxious awe her menial train around
Catch her faint whispers of half-uttered sound;
See her, in monstrous fellowship unite
At once the Scythian and the Sybarite!
Blending repugnant vices, misallied,
Which frugal nature purposed to divide;
See her, with indolence to fierceness joined,
Of body delicate, infirm of mind,
With languid tones imperious mandates urge;
With arm recumbent wield the household scourge;
And with unruffled mien, and placid sounds,
Contriving torture, and inflicting wounds.

hour at the Bishop's; they owe their appearance in print to the gallantry of my friend Mr. Walpole. To send them to you is keeping up the African trade of beads and bits of glass in exchange for gold and ivory. My sisters join me in kind regards to Mr. B. and yourself,

I am, my dear Madam,
Your obliged and very affectionate,
H. More."

The poem mentioned at the end of this letter was called 'Bonner's Ghost' in which he is supposed to lament the liberality of the age; this drew an answer, which will be found in the Appendix. It was never before printed, but copies must have been circulated, as the lines

> "Nor brush one cobweb from St. Paul's
> Lest you should shake the dome,"

were quoted in a Church debate in the House of Commons. It is to be supposed she did *not* send a copy to her friend Hannah More.

Between the Aikin and the Rogers family

a long friendship had subsisted, and Mrs. Barbauld watched the career of the young poet* with affectionate interest—he preserved among his papers the following letter —we cannot discover however whether he accepted the invitation it contains, and joined Mrs. Barbauld's party to the Long Room.

" To Mr. Samuel Rogers, junr.

Sir,

We are obliged to you for much elegant amusement, thro' the books which we safely received, and which we shall beg leave to keep a little longer. Your visit was so short that we wish to think of anything which may induce you to make a longer, and

*Mr. Rogers has often been accused of too great fondness for rank and fashion, he was however sincerely anxious to become a popular poet, and nothing gratified him more than to think his writings known to the classes below himself. He told Miss Aikin, in illustration of this, that being one evening in the gallery of the Opera House, he observed a plain, very respectable, elderly man gazing at him for a long time with great earnestness. At length, between the acts, this person quitted his seat, and coming up to him said solemnly, " pray sir, is your name Samuel Rogers?" "Yes, it is," he replied, with a benignant smile. " Then sir, I should be glad to know why you have changed your poulterer."

as we are to have an assembly at the Long Room, on Monday next, the 22nd, which they say will be a pretty good one, I take the liberty to ask whether it will be agreeable to you to be of our party, and in that case, we have a bed at your service. I could, I am sure, have my petition supported by a round robin of the young ladies of Hampstead, which would act like a spell to oblige your attendance, but not being willing to make use of such compulsory methods I will only say how much pleasure it will give to Sir,

Your obliged and obedient servant,

A. L. Barbauld.

Our dinner hour, if you can give us your company to dinner, is half after three.

Hampstead, October, (about 1788.)"

In the year 1793 Mrs. Barbauld paid a visit to Edinburgh, no letters are preserved describing it, but Sir Walter Scott gives the following account of an evening at Mr. Dugald Stewart's, at which he was not himself present, though he and Mrs.

Barbauld afterwards met in London.

It will be observed that he calls her Miss Aikin though she had been married more than twenty years.

"About the summer of 1793 or 1794, the celebrated Miss Letitia Aikin, better known as Mrs. Barbauld, paid a visit to Edinburgh, and was received by such literary society as the place then boasted, with the hospitality to which her talents and her worth entitled her. Among others, she was kindly welcomed by the late excellent and admired Professor Dugald Stewart, his lady, and family.

It was in their evening society that Miss Aikin drew from her pocket-book a version of 'Lenore' executed by William Taylor, Esq., of Norwich, with as much freedom as was consistent with great spirit and scrupulous fidelity. She read this composition to the company, who were electrified by the tale. It was the more successful, that Mr. Taylor had boldly copied the imitative harmony of the German, and described the spectral journey in language resembling

that of the original. Bürger had thus painted the ghastly career.

'Und hurre, hurre, hop, hop, hop!
Ging's fort in sausendem Galopp,
Dass Ross und Reiter schnoben,
Und Kies und Funken stoben.'

The words were rendered by the kindred sounds in English.

'Tramp, tramp, across the land they speed,
Splash, splash, across the sea,
Hurrah! the dead can ride apace
Dost fear to ride with me?'

When Miss Aikin had finished her recitation she replaced in her pocket-book the paper from which she had read it, and enjoyed the satisfaction of having made a strong impression on the hearers, whose bosoms thrilled yet the deeper as the ballad was not to be more closely introduced to them. The author* was not present on this occasion, although he had then the distinguished advantage of being a familiar friend and frequent visitor of Professor Stewart and his family. But he was absent from town while Miss Aikin was in Edinburgh,

* Sir Walter Scott.

and it was not until his return that he found all his friends in rapture with the intelligence and good sense of their visitor, but in particular with the wonderful translation from the German by means of which she had delighted and astonished them. The enthusiastic description given of Bürger's ballad and the broken account of the story, of which only two lines were recollected, inspired the author, who had some acquaintance as has been said, with the German language, and a strong taste for popular poetry, with a desire to see the original."

(From Scott's Essay on Imitations of the Ancient Ballads.)

The only reference found to this visit, is in a letter to her niece Lucy Aikin, who also visited Edinburgh many years later—it is dated from Stoke Newington, December 12th, 1811.

"My dear Niece,

I am much obliged to you for your entertaining letter, indeed we live very

much upon your letters, and as that kind of food has the property as well as the widow's cruse of being divided without diminishing, we do not scruple to impart it. I rejoice you spend your time so pleasantly at Edinburgh, as indeed you could not well fail to do in such a family and such a town.

I have not yet received from the Princess Mary her picture set in diamonds, nor a tea equipage of Sèvres China, nor so much as a gold medallion of the King, with a round robin of thanks from all the Royal family, one or other of which I have been in daily expectation of ever since I heard from you Lord Buchan's intention with regard to my poor copy of verses,* which, I must confess I did not think quite calculated to please a courtly ear, however, as Lord Buchan has got them, let him do what he pleases.—Pray tell him with my compliments, that I have by no means forgotten his hospitality nor the pleasant day I spent at Dryburgh Abbey, nor the busts, nor the

* On the King's illness.

incident of my hat's falling into the Tweed, and if he will send me the verses he wrote on that occasion, I will send him mine on the ruins of the Abbey.....Does Jeffery ride his great horse yet? By the way, I wish Grace would draw a caricature of that scene, where *you* were bridling, Miss Fletcher I suppose tittering, and the conscious culprit* bowing—or is he where he ought to be, on his knees at your feet—but possibly you are very good friends by this time.

Well I have finished my verses, there are a hundred and fifty faults in them, more than I can mend, but my brother is pleased with them, so I shall have some talk with friend Richard about it.† I would advise you to let Constable have the Ode to Dun

* Dr.——had been engaged to Miss Aikin; he broke it off owing to a distrust of his pecuniary resources, which turned out to be quite unfounded. Meeting her some years after at Edinburgh, where she was much admired and caressed, he would gladly have renewed the engagement had Miss A. been so inclined; she was so no longer however, though they remained good friends to the end of their lives.

† Mr. Richard Taylor, the printer.

Edin and Holyrood House, and that pretty little piece to Grace Fletcher on her drawing her mother's portrait, which you have written, but send us down some copies by the coach, for I want to see them. How ridiculous the complaint of the Clans you tell me of against Miss Baillie. I suppose it would be taking too great a liberty to write anything about Gog and Magog, lest it should affront some of their descendants.

Pray if you see Miss Maclear give her my affectionate compliments, and to Mr. and Mrs. Dugald Stewart pray express my affectionate veneration. Farewell, tho' we miss you, we do not wish you in any other place or company than that where you are receiving and giving so much pleasure.

Your affectionate aunt,

A. L. Barbauld."

A letter from Dr. Priestley in his self-imposed banishment in America belongs to this period.

"Northumberland,
United States, 1797.

Dear Mrs. Barbauld,

The pleasure I received from your letter was the greater from it having been unexpected. It has brought a great number of pleasing scenes to mind, tho' attended with the melancholy reflection that one person* present to them all is now absent. Tho' for many years she wrote but few letters, there were not many persons who were more frequently the subject of our conversation, or whom she spoke of with so much pleasure as yourself. Indeed, pleasing impressions of so early a date are not soon effaced, if no pains were taken to revive them. If my diaries had not been destroyed in the riots, I should have been able to retrace some of them better than I can do now. She often lamented the loss of a folio book, into which she had copied all your unpublished poems, and other small pieces, especially the first poem we ever saw of yours, on taking leave of her when we left

* His wife.

Warrington, and of this I think I heard you say you had no copy. The perusal of it would give me more pleasure now than it did at the first. The short and very just character which you draw of her I have, and value much. We regretted also the loss of the little poem you wrote on the birth of Joseph. But the time is fast approaching, with respect to me, when our intercourse, from which I have derived so much satisfaction, will be renewed with advantage; and to this future scene late events have drawn my attention in a more particular manner than ever. How much to be pitied are they who are not Christians. What consolation can they have in their sorrow? mine have sometimes such a mixture of joy as hardly to describe the name.

Your letter, tho' dated Feb. 28th, I have but just received, and since that date I find I am under particular obligations to you for taking under your care a daughter of Sally.* A friend in need, they say, is a friend indeed, and such you are to her, and I consider it

* Dr. Priestley's daughter, Mrs. Finch.

as more than any act of friendship to myself.

What you wish *almost*, I wish *altogether*, that you and many others of my friends, in England, were here. There cannot be a more delightful spot on the face of the earth, and here I trust we shall have *peace*. In England, I fear, there will be troubles. If possible, however, I propose to myself the satisfaction of seeing my native country once more before I die.

I am glad that what I published here in defence of Christianity, gives you pleasure. By this time you may have seen more pieces of the same tendency. Here the defection from Christian principles is as great as with you. But I consider it a certain sign of better times. I am much pleased with Mr. Towers *on Prophecy*. It is an extraordinary performance for so young a man. I hope that a beginning being now made, our correspondence will be continued, at least occasionally. I shall always be exceedingly happy to hear from you. With all our best respects, Your's and Mr. Barbauld's,

Most sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY."

Dr. Aikin who had been for some years established as a physician in London, was in 1798 attacked with an illness which seemed to threaten his life, and put an end to his hopes of remaining in practice. He therefore gave up his house to his son Charles, and took one in Stoke Newington, then a pretty and rural village, of which Lucy Aikin writes, "This suburban village has been a very Elysian field of non-conformity. Worthy Dr. Watts resided here five years from 1876, as tutor to the son of Sir John Hartopp, Bart. The last thirty-six years of his life, which ended in 1748, were also passed here under the roof of first, Sir Thomas Abney, and afterwards of his widow and daughter in succession. Dr. Price lived as domestic chaplain for the thirteen years preceding 1757, with Mr. Streatfield, of Church street, Stoke Newington, in one

of the two houses which about 1709 had afforded a tranquil shelter to the memorable Daniel Defoe, also a dissenter.

Here too England's great philanthropist John Howard, born in 1727, resided between 1752 and 1756. On his removal, with characteristic generosity, he made a handsome donation to the congregation in Church street, for the purpose of providing a house for the minister. Here no doubt must have been formed his intimate, confidential, and affectionate friendship, with the excellent Dr. Price, in which he found unfailing aid and solace, down to their last solemn leave-taking, previous to the departure of Howard on his last pilgrimage."

Dr. Aikin, though so ill when he went to Stoke Newington (to which the family were drawn by its being the abode of Mrs. Kinder, Mrs. Aikin's only sister,) recovered, and really lived twenty years there; giving himself to a life of literature, but occasionally practising in consultation, and attending many poor persons gratuitously.

Between himself and his sister the tend-

erest affection had always existed, and the longing for daily intercourse now became so strong in both, that Mrs. Barbauld in 1802 persuaded her husband to quit Hampstead and purchase a house close to her brother's, in which she remained to the end of her life. A little poem addressed to her by her brother, at this time expresses their feelings.

Yet one dear wish still struggles in my breast,
And points one darling object unpossest;—
How many years have whirled their rapid course
Since we, sole streamlets from one honored source,
In fond affection as in blood allied,
Have wandered devious from each other's side;
Allowed to catch alone some transient view,
Scarce long enough to think the vision true!
O then while yet of life some zest remains,
While transport yet can swell the beating veins,
While sweet remembrance keeps her wonted seat,
And fancy still retains some genial heat;
When evening bids each busy task be o'er,
Once let us meet again, to part no more!

The following letters belong to this time. They are arranged according to dates. The literary project, mentioned by Miss Edgeworth, in the first letter, does not appear to have ever been carried out.

July 22nd, 1804.

"My dear Madam,

I will not trouble you with any common places, about time, and distance, and friendship, but taking it for granted that you are the same Mrs. Barbauld, and that I am the same Maria E. who made acquaintance with each other in the year 1799, I proceed to mention a seheme of my father's. He thinks that a periodical paper, to be written entirely by ladies, would succeed, and we wish that all the literary ladies of the present day might be invited to take a share in it.—No papers to be rejected—each to be signed by the initial of the author's name—each to be inserted in the order in which it is received.

If you approve, tell us what would be the best method of proceeding. Would a paper in the Monthly Magazine put the business in train? Why cannot you, dear Mrs. Barbauld, prevail upon yourself to come to Ireland, or rather, why cannot *we* prevail upon you? We do not pretend to diminish the terrors of sea-sickness, but we could

hope to balance a few hours of pain by some months of pleasure. We are vain enough to feel tolerably certain that you would be happy in the midst of a family, united amongst themselves, who have from their childhood, heard the name of Mrs. Barbauld with respect, and who, as they have grown up, have learnt better and better to appreciate her merit.

Mrs. Edgeworth and my father join with me in every kind wish for your health and happiness, and we hope we have not lost our place in good Mr. Barbauld's esteem and affection. Believe me to be, my dear madam,

Your sincerely affectionate,
MARIA EDGEWORTH."

"Stoke Newington,
Aug. 30th, 1804.

Dear Madam,

I wish I could convey to you an adequate idea of the pleasure it gave me to receive a letter from your hand, and I will add, of the sensibility excited in me by that

token of your esteem, conscious as I was that my own hand had but ill obeyed the dictates of my heart, in expressing those sentiments of esteem and regard which are indelibly engraven upon it. When I received your letter I was just going to Tunbridge, and as the contents required some consideration, I thought it best not to answer it till my return. As to the scheme of a periodical paper, there is no one who would not be delighted to see it undertaken by yourself and *Co.*, provided the *Co.* was in any measure adequate to the first of the firm, but I do not know what to say to the idea, which seems to be a leading one in your plan, of inviting the literary ladies to join it. All the literary ladies! Mercy on us! Have you ever reckoned up how many there are, or computed how much trash, and how many discordant materials would be poured in from such a general invitation. I feel also doubtful of the propriety of making it declaredly a *lady's paper*. There is no bond of union among literary women, any more than among literary men; different senti-

ments and different connections separate them much more than the joint interest of their sex would unite them. Mrs. Hannah More would not write along with you or me, and we should probably hesitate at joining Miss Hays, or if she were living, Mrs. Godwin. But suppose a sufficient number willing and able to co-operate, which I am willing to think might probably be found, still I do not see why it should be ostensibly 'The Lady's Paper.' Many would sneer at the title, they would pretend to expect, however unreasonably, frivolity or romance. There is a great difference between a paper written *by* a lady, and *as* a lady. To write professedly as a female junto seems in some measure to suggest a certain cast of sentiment, and you would write in trammels. If a number of clergymen were to join in writing a paper, I think they should not call it '*The Clergymen's Paper*,' except they meant to make it chiefly theological. With regard to the scheme in general of a periodical paper, I am apt to think there is room for one. *The Mirror*, and Cumber-

land's *Observer* were the last of the kind, if indeed they may be reckoned of the kind. The Mirror was never circulated in England but in vols., and I am not sure whether the Observer was anywhere. A paper is a pleasing mode of writing, as it admits equally the lightest and the gravest subjects; the most desultory, and the most profound, if treated concisely; but humour and character, the manners and modes of the times, seem to be the subject more particularly called for. And why if you can find gentlemen, should not gentlemen be admitted. I am sure we have not any writer of that sex who ought not, and I believe who would not, be proud to join with Miss Edgeworth; and surely Mr. Edgeworth at least would give his assistance, and would not Dr. Beddoes? How rich an accession that would be. One thing my own judgment is clear in, that there ought not to be more than half-a-dozen principals in such a scheme, occasional correspondence should also be admitted, but by no means without selection, and a very strict one too, other-

wise you would be overwhelmed with trash; and if you print in London, the person who selects must live there, and perhaps the same person as Editor should have the care of the paper, so far that it should be on him or her to see that the press did not stand still. I should think signatures, that might be afterwards acknowledged like those in the Spectator, would in general be more agreeable to the feelings of the writers than the giving the name at first. With regard to myself, I would offer you my assistance, and should feel highly gratified in all respects if you permitted me to join my name with yours, did I feel that fertility and flow of fancy which is requisite for the undertaking. Once it was a favorite scheme of mine, had my brother been willing to join, and I had then several little pieces which might have answered such a purpose, but they have been scattered about in Magazines, and I dare not trust to the future, expecting naturally to grow duller and duller, and besides always writing slow, so that I should not dare to bring upon myself an

obligation, I should feel a tremendous one, that of supplying the press at stated times, whether I have anything to say or not—but I would rank with pleasure among the occasional contributors, If I can be of any service by sounding or inviting anybody that I know in London, male or female, to the scheme, command me. We have here Miss Baillie, Mrs. Opie, give me leave to add my niece Lucy Aikin, and many others; Mr. S. Rogers I rather think would not be averse to join a scheme of this kind. But you—you are a host in yourself. How much have we all to thank you for of entertainment and instruction, how admirably have you contrived to join fancy, interest, knowledge of the world, sound sense, useful morality in the various pieces which with so rich and flowing a vein of instruction you have poured out before us. Will you permit me to name my two favorites in your last work. They are *Rosanna* and *To-morrow*, tho' the latter I confess I read not without some twinges of conscience which interrupted my amusement.....

I am told just now I ought to be frightened at the impending invasion, and if I were at a watering place perhaps I should, but really the invasion has been *got up* so often it begins to lose its effect, and I think we are pretty well prepared; besides my being afraid will do no good.

Remember us to Mr. and Mrs. Edgeworth with affection and gratitude, and may every happiness rest on yourself and your family is the wish of Mr. Barbauld and myself."

To Mrs. Barbauld,

"Edgeworthstown,

September 4th 1804.

My dear Madam,

I tell you, because I know it will give you pleasure, that no people in similar situations upon this oblate spheroid which used formerly to be called a globe, live together in more perfect amity and confidence than Mrs. E., Maria, and myself, and yet till this day I never ventured to open a letter directed to either of them. But this morn-

ing, as Maria's literary partner, I took it upon my conscience and honour to open yours in her absence, as I knew your hand and as I was privy to the contents of her letter to you. She will take great pleasure in returning an answer of her own; but that shall not prevent me from seizing this favourable occasion of assuring you of my most sincere and affectionate esteem, and of the regard and respect which I feel for Mr. Barbauld.

I agree with you implicitly in all you say with respect to my scheme for a Feminead. It is something curious that the subject and the title should be spoken of in Mr. Edwards' letters to Richardson, which came to our hands long after Maria had written to you.

In particular I agree with you about the imprudence of engaging to furnish, as poor Johnson was obliged to do, a certain quantity of copy every week. To avoid this necessity nothing is requisite but such a collection of papers as would suffice for two thirds of the work before we published any. To prevent

all cavil as to female authorship—let the paper be announced as the work of a society of Gentlemen and Ladies. Bankers, I mean honest, solvent bankers, keep two-thirds of whatever may be demanded from them in constant readiness, we may therefore not only collect two-thirds of the original stock, but each of the society may engage to furnish one additional paper as soon as one of their writing has been published.—The editor would thus be tolerably secure of sufficient support.

The names you mention are highly approved of in this family. Miss Baillie has more of what is usually called genius than most ladies whose works have fallen into my hands. The correctness, sound judgment, and enlarged mind of another female writer, who has still more genius, might be acquired by Miss B. if she is a lady who supposes that those who write and act the best are those who are most capable of improvement. I do not know Mrs. Inchbald, but my son Lovell (who is still prisoner at Verdun) thought well of her; would she be a useful

correspondent? We are so unfortunate as never to have seen Miss Aikin's poetry for children; but we saw one piece of her writing in London five years ago, and we saw the lady herself. We are therefore able to determine that she does not disgrace the Aikin school.

We have read the greatest part of Richardson's Life and Correspondence. Your criticisms are excellent, and your censures of the indecent passages in your author are highly becoming and highly useful. As your sex becomes more civilized every day, it is necessary that they should become more circumspect in conversation and in all the paraphernalia of modesty. A married lady in France is allowed one lover, she is pardon'd for two; three is rather too many—but great delicacy of sentiment, elegant language, decent dress, and a good choice of the objects of her attachments will preserve her from absolute excommunication, but a failure in any of these circumstances places her in a disreputable class of females. You have made R. appear to

great advantage, without using any of the unfaithful arts of an editor. You have shewn, that like other mortals, he had failings; but his enthusiasm for virtue, his generosity, and true politeness of heart and conduct, are brought so distinctly before the eye, that we love the man as much as we admire the author. His invitations to his friends are so kind and so hearty, that we really wish to learn his art of persuading those whom he loved to visit him, and we would try it first upon you. If the French land in England, which I think will happen, come over here, where you may be sure they will not come till they have tried their fortune on the shores of Britain.

We have learned some good precepts from your criticisms, and in return I have mark'd two or three careless passages in the early part of your life of Richardson. I took the book out of the hands of one of the eight readers round our table this 4th of September, 1804, 9 p.m., to look for some of my criticisms, but I was so struck upon the second reading with your excellent remarks

upon Pamela, that I could not turn away to look for them, and the book could not be spared to me. Why do you quote Sedley's lines, they are un peu trop séduisants. I am delighted with Mad. Klopstock, and absolutely shocked at her death. Richardson's remarks on Miss Mulso's correspondence about love are of high value, particularly to us, as they are the best apologies I have seen for Belinda—whom Madam de Sanza (formerly Mlle. Flacoux) thought a monster, not a woman.

Mrs. E's. daughter, whom she was nursing when you saw her, caught something of the divine air from your kisses. She promises to have an observing judicious mind and an affectionate temper. She has two other daughters—none of them beauties —but all very well—all healthy. I have a charming daughter— a most promising lad of science, ten years old—and two fine captains, who will defend and amuse you if you come here—but nobody here or elsewhere values you more highly than I do.

Be so good as to give my respects to Dr.

Aikin who supports virtue, science, and good letters, so ably by his pen and his example.

I am, Dr. Madam,

Most sincerely yours,

R. L. Edgeworth."

"Edgeworthstown,

Sept. 23rd, 1804,

My dear Madam,

On my return home yesterday I had the pleasure of your letter; my father would not forward it to me, but kept it, as he said, on purpose to increase my agreeable associations with home. It was indeed a great pleasure to receive such a letter from you. From the first moment that you professed a regard for us, I never could doubt of our holding a place in your esteem, so long as we remained unchanged; but notwithstanding the steadiness of this belief, it was delightful to me to receive assurances under your own hand and seal that I was in the right. The freedom and affectionate warmth of your letter were peculiarly grateful to me; and though the praise you bestow

on some of our works, may be far beyond what your cool judgment would allow, yet I am perfectly well satisfied to find that in our cause your judgment is not cool. Is not it said of Pascal, that he wore a girdle of spikes, which he pressed into himself whenever he was conscious of any emotions of vanity? How deep they must have been pressed, if he had been praised by Mrs. Barbauld! For my part, I do not pretend to any ascetic humility, nor do I inflict upon myself the penance of abstinence from the refined delicacies of praise—especially when they are presented by a friend.

With respect to *the Lady's Paper*, my father desires me to tell you, dear Madam, that it was his proposal, not mine; I am glad that your objections have appeared to him satisfactory. I agree with you perfectly in thinking that to provoke a war with the other sex, would be neither politic nor becoming in ours. Our literature should never be placed in competition with theirs to plague them, it should be added to the common stock of amusement and happiness.

To attempt to form a corps of literary women, where all would wish to be officers, except those best suited to command, where there would be no discipline, and where, as you observe, the individuals might not choose to mess together, would be absurd and ridiculous.

As I was not at home, when my father answered your letter, I am perhaps repeating the very things which he has said; but this you must excuse, for we are notorious for expressing the same ideas, often in the same words, at different ends of the same room.

To one thing in your letter, dear Madam, I must object, even if my father has not dared to do so: I must remonstrate against your being only an occasional correspondent. I am not surprised, that you should not like to bind yourself to feed the press with daily delicacies, but by proper economy and arrangements, amongst the principal purveyors, you would never be exposed to this tremendous necessity. I hope therefore that upon *second thoughts*, which Dr. Aikin

will in this case allow to be best, you will consent to give credit to our *firm*, by placing your name foremost as the acting partner. We should rejoice to have the able, and elegant assistance of Miss Aikin, of your brother, and of Mr. Rogers, Miss Baillie, and Mrs. Opie.

Do not imagine, dear Mrs. Barbauld, when I mention the life of Richardson, that I am going to attempt that return of eulogium, with which authors sometimes treat each other.—You are quite above this traffic of bays, and, I hope, so am I. The eager interest with which I read the life of Richardson you would have thought the most unequivocal testimony I could give of my liking it. My father, in jest, said that I was wildly anxious to read it, because it was the life of an author, but I knew that my interest in it arose from its being written by Mrs. Barbauld. I think I should be able to distinguish her style from that of any other female writer by the ease, frequency, and felicity, of its classical allusions —allusions sufficiently intelligible to the

unlearned, and which serve as freemason signs to the learned.

Though you have such an aversion to the sea, we do not yet give up the hopes of having you and Mr. Barbauld at Edgeworthstown. We shall expect you along with the blessings of peace. But when—is I fear in the bosom of Emperors. In the mean time, dear madam, accept my grateful thanks for your kindness, and believe me with sincere esteem and admiration.

Affectionately yours,

Maria Edgeworth."

"Stoke Newington,

January 28th, 1805.

Dear Miss Edgeworth,

I appear before you again as a culprit, and you have too much reason to imagine me inattentive to the contents of your last most friendly letter. They have however dwelt much upon my mind, and when I returned home (for I received it at Bristol) I revolved the scheme much in my

mind, and made what enquiries I could of the probable success of a periodical paper, and it should seem that the first step should be to consult with a Bookseller, for tho' there would be no doubt of the success when gathered into volumes, there is no very recent experience of an undertaking of this kind in the *feuille volante*. The *Mirrors* were never published in England, till they were in volumes; and the *Ramblers*, as I see from Richardson's correspondence, lay heavy on Cave's hands when they first came out. Therefore the opinion of a Bookseller should be first had, and that Bookseller should be a man, active, and disposed to push such a scheme, not to let the papers sleep in his shop for want of advertisements, &c. Then as to the coadjutors, as it is no longer necessary they should be all ladies, I have been this long while attacking my brother on the subject, but on account of his other engagements, I cannot get him to think of more than an occasional paper, which I dare say he would now and then offer. There is a person, whom I should think very proper

for such an undertaking, and I think it not unlikely that it might suit him, as, with a good deal of genius, he has not, that I know of, any important literary work in hand; I mean Mr. William Taylor of Norwich. He has an uncommon share of learning and information, and great originality of thought and style; the last mentioned quality it is necessary to apprise you of, because it often leads him to singularity both in matter and style, and I believe he often sports opinions for the value of defending them, with a great deal of ingenuity and critical acumen. In language, he is fond of old Saxon words, thinking, and very justly, that we have weakened the nerve and strength of our language, by abandoning much of its ancient riches, But he *can* write without these particularities. He has written a good deal of poetry, which ought, I think, to have established his fame, but it has been carelessly thrown into Magazines, piece by piece, and has not assumed that importance to the eye, which is generally necessary to give celebrity. Perhaps you may have seen

his translation (the best I think) of Bürger's Leonora; and a beautiful one of Goethe's Iphigenia. As a man, he is most amiable and worthy. I was on the point of mentioning the scheme to him, but I thought it was right *you* should first know what he was. But, my dear Madam, I am convinced it is necessary for such a scheme as this, that you should yourself come to town, and in truth you ought to do so on every account. We cannot let Ireland engross you. Come and enjoy your own celebrity. Come and give pleasure to your numerous friends. Come and explore all London can afford of food for the mind and the imagination. In two or three years there is always something new. How much I should rejoice in such a determination, I trust I need not say, nor how much I shall feel myself honoured and delighted with as much as you can afford me of your society. I became very impatient for your *Griselda*, before Johnson thought proper to produce it, need I add we have read it with great pleasure. It is charming, like everything you write, but I

can tell you the gentlemen like it better than the ladies, and if you were to be tried by a jury of your own sex, I do not know what punishment you might be sentenced to, for having betrayed their cause. "The author is one of your own sex, we men have nothing to do but to stand by and laugh;" was the remark of a gentleman, no less candid a man than Dr. Aikin: and then the moral (a general moral if I understand it right), that a man must not indulge his wife too much! If I were a new-married woman, I do not know whether I would forgive you till you had made the amende honorable, by writing something to expose the men. All however are unanimous in admiring the sprightliness of the dialogue, and the ingenious and varied perversenesses of the heroine. The Royal Institution has been very much crowded this year, and Sidney Smith is the favourite of the day. I have not heard him, but I understand he makes his lectures on morals very *diverting*, which is not exactly what I should have expected from such a subject, however, it suc-

ceeds. Have you seen Master Betty? have you heard Sidney Smith? are the questions that generally succeed one another. We enjoyed great pleasure this summer in seeing your two sisters at Bristol, and in being introduced to Mr. King, whom we had not seen before. And now, if I were not so near the bottom of my paper, I should turn to Mr. Edgeworth, and thank him for the favour of a charming letter, which, if I possessed a share of his sprightliness, I would endeavour to answer. I am very sensible to the obliging things you both say on the subject of Richardson, and I kiss the rod with regard to the verses of Sedley. To own the truth, my conscience did remonstrate a little, but I was seduced by the beauty of the verses. Seriously however I shall be much obliged to Mr. Edgeworth or you for any criticisms on the *life*, because Phillips talks of publishing it separately. I am obliged to comprise in little room a thousand things, as well from Mr. Barbauld as myself, which would endeavour to express the esteem and affection so justly due to

Mr. and Mrs. Edgeworth and all your family.
Believe me ever, with high regard.

Yours &c.,

A. L. Barbauld."

To Miss Aikin,

At Mr. Taylor's, Norwich.

"My dear Niece,

After the very entertaining letter you favoured me with, you had a right to expect an earlier answer, and nothing, believe me, has prevented it, but the conciousness of not having equal entertainment to offer in return.

I am much obliged to you for the information relative to the convenience of our good friends with regard to receiving us, but I do not now think we shall take the journey at all this year, for I am grown so deaf of late, that I am not willing to intrude such an infirmity on the sprightly and animating parties Norwich affords, or to undergo myself the mortification of Tantalus, when the cup of social joy is offered to my lips. I rejoice however in the pleasure

that you are giving and receiving, and most particularly in the good accounts of your health, the foundation of all enjoyment. I hope this journey will strengthen and confirm it, and that every circumstance will contribute to increase the pleasure we shall enjoy, when we see you again. We have paid two pleasant visits since I heard from you, one was to Mr. Rogers in his elegant house, looking into the Green Park, every decoration of which is as elegant and *recherché* as his verses. Indeed, I think one might naturally conclude from the perusal of his poems, that his bookcase is of satin-wood, and his drawing room furnished with marbles, bronzes, &c. The company was Mrs. Weddel a connoiseur in painting and an intimate friend of the late Mr. Palgrave, Gifford, Mathias, the Rogers', and Sharpes, and Mr. S.—distinguished in the witty and fashionable world, and whose conversation is esteemed by his admirers the most brilliant of any man's in those circles. There is a romantic story belonging to his marriage. When abroad in Italy, he unconsiously, as

it is said, made a conquest of the heart of a married lady. Her husband, who doted upon her, discovered his wife's attachment, I believe indeed she acknowledged it to him, upon which he wrote to Mr. S. who had then left the place, to meet him at a town which he named. Mr. S. went and found the corpse of the husband, who had shot himself, and a letter in which he said that finding Mr. S. alone could make his wife happy, he had taken out of the way the only impediment to their union and charged him as a man of honour to marry and protect his wife. And could she marry him upon her husband's grave said I? But Mr. Barbauld asserts she was obliged to it from regard to her husband, who otherwise would have shot himself thro' the head for nothing. I leave it as a crust for the female casuists. Well, our other visit was paid yesterday to Dr. Gregory* (or *parson* G. as his parishioners call him) and his wife at West Ham. My brother and sister were with

* Rector of West Ham, and husband to a dear old friend of Mrs. Barbauld's.

us. We called in the way on Mr. Lindsay who has got a very noble house indeed by Old Ford, which situation lying under some suspicion from the neighbourhood of the Lea marshes, Mr. Macmurdo stoutly asserted that the playground was as high as St. Paul's. West Ham betrays its vicinity by a plantation of reeds for the basket makers, and causeways raised above the meadows, and as a village it is inferior to Layton—however our friends like it, they have got a good house and Mrs. Gregory seems quite happy with the varied employments of visiting the parish, taking care of her children, pigs, ducks, peacocks, cows, &c., &c.; she assures me she can make butter.

We have been reading with might and main to get thro' Mr. Roscoe's four 4to vols.; for four 4to vols., let me tell you, is an arduous undertaking; and there is such an utter depravity of morals, and all kind of principles among these Italians, that there is hardly one I care three farthings about. I was struck with one passage as affording a fine frame for a novel in the gloomy and

terrible style to be entitled *The Confessions of Gonsalvo*. Gonsalvo, it seems, on his death-bed lamented two faults he had been guilty of in the course of his life; but there was a third crime he never would reveal, 'he *could* have unfolded a tale' says Roscoe, but he died a penitent, and trusted it with his other faults to the bosom of his God. Now he *must* have revealed it to his Confessor who might have committed it to writing and it was probably found by the French, in some of the late convulsions, from whence Mr. Godwin, I think, might come to the knowledge of this mysterious and horrible crime. Or will you and Mr. Taylor undertake it? But I believe your conferences are rather metaphysical, and if so, pray Madam what is your opinion of *causation?* Do you agree with Dugald Stewart, Hume, and Mr. Leslie, because if you do, I think you may as well throw Paley's last work into the fire. But perhaps you are by this time got to Yarmouth, and if so, I fear you are out of the way of enjoying and giving pleasure. Whereever you are, pray remember us to those we

know and love. To Mr. Taylor and dear Susan, I will certainly write soon. There is only one sentence of your letter I quarrel with, where you *apologize* for large paper. Fie! Repeat the fault and I will forgive the apology. All are well and desire to be remembered.

Your affectionate aunt,

A. L. Barbauld.

Stoke Newington,
July 27th, 1805."

"Edgeworthstown,
Feb. 26th, 1806.

My dear Mrs. Barbauld,

Holcroft wrote the heads of the Chapters in Popular Tales; he was employed by Johnson to correct the press. We were so much *scandalized* when we saw them that Johnson offered to cancel the whole impression. My father says that I should not enter into long explanations about trifles; but I cannot help being anxious to assure you, that those trite vulgar sentences were

not written by my father and preceptor. You will wonder why I should thus abruptly address my justification to you. My dear Madam, we have just been reading a review, or rather an eulogium of Popular Tales, which from the excellence of the writing and its generous warmth, we are persuaded could be written by no other but our friend Mrs. Barbauld. I never felt, and my father declares he never felt, so much pleasure from any praise—indeed we never before received any of so high value and from a judge whom we so much respect. We would rather have one grain of such praise than a cwt. of compliment from common critics.

I regret that I inserted in the Modern Griselda the offensive line from Chaucer. Let me assure you that this little tale was written in playfulness not bitterness of heart. My father had often declared that he could not be imposed upon by me; but that he should know my writing without my name to it. When he was absent for a few weeks, and none but the *ladies* of the family at home, I wrote this story, sent it to

Johnson, had it printed with a title page without my name, and on my father's return home showed it to him. Not one of the female committee who sat upon it every day whilst it was writing and reading ever imagined that it would be thought a severe libel upon the sex—perhaps because their attention was fixed upon Mrs. Granby, who is at least as much a panegyric as Mrs. Bolingbroke is a satire upon the sex. It is curious that the Edinburgh Reviewers laugh at us for introducing into every story some charming wife, sister, mother, or daughter, who acts the part of the good fairy of the piece. Leonora will confirm them in this opinion and will I hope make my peace with you.

There is some probability that my father and two or three of this family may be in England this year, and we look forward to the hopes of seeing you, my dear Madam, as one of the greatest pleasures that a visit to London can afford. My brother Sneyd, who is going to enter the Temple, will certainly accompany my father to England.

You may remember, if you do not always forget your own goodness, that you selected and read to us, several years ago, some lines *On Evening* in the Monthly Mag. by C. S. E.—written when he was ten years old. He has not indulged since in writing much poetry as he had far other studies to pursue for the College of Dublin—on quiting that College he wished to leave some memorial behind, and he has just finished a poem called *The 'Transmigrations of Indur'* —the plan taken from your tale in Evenings at Home. If this poem should obtain a premium from the College we shall think it worthy of the honor of being presented to you my dear Mrs. Barbauld.

My father did not see you since he saw Mr. and Mrs. Carr in Bloomsbury Square: they were extremely civil to him, and impressed him with the idea that they would be inclined to comply with any reasonable request that he might make to them. My father wishes for Mr. Carr's advice as to the best method of disposing of Sneyd in London for two years to come. It is his

present intention to be called to the Irish bar, and two years will be sufficient eating for him, to complete his terms, as he has already eaten nine terms in Dublin. If Mr. Carr could afford five minutes to write to him he would esteem it a real favour.

He wants his advice at present, simply on these questions—

Where should Sneyd *lodge*? And what mode of *living* whould he recommend?

Mrs. Edgeworth and my father are as anxious as I am to preserve a place in Mr. Barbauld's benevolent heart. My father hopes he is now quite well.

Believe me, dear Mrs. Barbauld, I am with sincere esteem and grateful affection,

Your friend,

MARIA EDGEWORTH."

To Miss Edgeworth,

"Stoke Newington,

March 23rd, 1806.

Dear Madam,

Few things, believe me, can give me greater pleasure than to be remembered

by you with that partiality which you have indulged me with. To read you, to hear from you, and to see you, makes up the most agreeable climax in the world, and I am truly delighted to find that we on this side the water may hope to enjoy the last part of it. But I was much surprised to see your letter begin with the name of Holcroft. How, thought I, can Holcroft come in as a third between Miss Edgeworth and me? To be serious, I do assure you upon my honour, that I did *not write* the Review of Popular Tales,* nor did I see a single word of it till I received the printed vol. Nor did I ever review any work of yours. I am also of opinion that the manner in which the titles were mentioned, was not sufficiently respectful to Mr. Edgeworth, even supposing him the author, and that it was very little necessary to mention them at all. For my own part I am not sure that I knew there were titles till Mr. Edgeworth directed my attention towards them, for when a building is very inviting I am but

* It was written by Lucy Aikin.

little inclined to stop at the porch. And now, my dear Miss Edgeworth, permit me to ask whether it is not more regular to address any remarks relative to a Review to the *Editor*, who is the only ostensible person in the business. I do assure you I have never asked, nor do I know, the Reviewer of any article of mine in the *Annual* R., tho' the Editor is my own Nephew. And now let me thank you for the very high pleasure and entertainment we have recently received from your Leonora, the heroine is an amiable and touching picture of every virtue, and if there are any who think you have played false to our sex in Griselda, I hope they will be satisfied with the *amende honorable* you have made them. If I were writing to any one but yourself, I should say more than you would perhaps allow me to, of the delicate satire, the good sense and knowledge of life, the wit and brilliancy displayed in the characters of Olivia and Gabrielle, that admirable Gabrielle, so truly a Frenchwoman, so characteristic, and yet, till you drew her,

not that I know of, described. And the General's letters! But I forbear. There is however in all human compositions something for a critic to nibble at, and if I have the pleasure of seeing you, I shall ask you whether you believe a promise binding upon the conscience, that cannot be kept without a crime, an engagement to one person that implies the breach of a previous solemn vow to another. It is impossible, I think, such a sentiment can be yours, yet is not the reader led to think so? Extricate me my dear Friend from this difficulty. Pray have you seen a small vol. of Poems by Mr. Montgomery?* We are all delighted with them, and consider him as a new star risen on the poetical horizon. The author is a printer at Sheffield, and has made himself what he is, and seems to have keenly felt, as all in narrow circumstances must do, the mortification of having his mind ill suited to his situation and his prospects. There is a poem in particular, entitled *the Ocean*, very striking, both from its sentiments and its

* James Montgomery.

harmony. A verse of it has been running in my head all day, as the Park and Tower Guns were firing for our late victory.—

> For Britannia is wielding her trident to-day,
> And consuming her foes in her ire;
> She is hurling her thunders with absolute sway,
> From her wave-ruling chariots of fire.

I have sent Mr. Edgeworth's Queries to Mr. Carr, from whom I suppose he has heard or will hear. I think it is since Mr. E. saw him that Mr. Carr has got the place of Solicitor of Excise. I hope in any case we shall see Mr. Sneyd's Poem when he comes to town. The subject seems to me susceptible of much poetical embellishment. We are impatient to know when you come to London, and how many of the family will be of the party; I would have all, I would not willingly spare one of you to stay at home. When the new projected Balloons are perfected, how pleasantly a family party might come over in one. I have only one word to say, indulge us at Newington as much as you can with your much valued company. In the mean time, present from

Mr. Barbauld and myself, the most cordial and respectful remembrances to Mr. and Mrs. Edgeworth and all the family, and believe me, with the highest sentiments of esteem, Dear Madam,

Your obliged and faithful,

A. L. Barbauld.

Mr. Barbauld's increasing mental disease at this time, made his wife constantly feel the comfort of living close to her brother and his family—though it was not till her life was actually endangered by his violence, that she would consent to any restraint being put upon the unhappy sufferer. He one day at dinner, seized a knife from the table and pursued her round the room; she only escaped by springing from the window

into the garden, and taking refuge in Dr. Aikin's house.* In the end, a separation took place, and Mr. Barbauld was, in the care of a keeper, removed to a house next Mr. C. R. Aikin's, in London, where he seemed for a time to mend. Being, however, imprudently trusted with money, he one day bribed his attendant to allow him to walk out alone, and as he never returned, search was made, and his lifeless body found in the New River. Miss Aikin remarks "and though the escape of a sufferer, from the most melancholy of human maladies, could not in itself be a subject of rational regret, her spirits were deeply wounded both by the

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* It was singular that Mrs. B. ran another danger from the same cause a few years later.

In Mr. Robinson's diary he gives an interesting account of Mr. Elton Hamond, a young man of great talents, eloquence, and remarkably fine person. He came to Mrs. B. with an introduction from the Edgeworths, and was a very frequent visitor, indeed, he persuaded her to take his sister as an inmate for several years. After a time he became very strange, and in the end destroyed himself. Mr. Robinson, whom he left his executor, found after his death, among his papers, one which discussed at great length, the best way of '*putting an end to Mrs. Barbauld's life*'—by poison, a sudden blow, shooting, stabbing, &c.

severe trials through which she had passed, and by the mournful void, which always succeeds the removal of an object of long and deep, however painful, interest. An affecting Dirge was found among her poems which records her feelings on this occasion."

Pure spirit! O where art thou now!
O whisper to my soul!
O let some soothing thought of thee
This bitter grief controul!

T'is not for thee the tears I shed,
Thy sufferings now are o'er;
The sea is calm, the tempest past,
On that eternal shore.

No more the storms that wrecked thy peace,
Shall tear that gentle breast,
Nor Summer's rage, nor Winter's cold,
Thy poor, poor frame molest.

Thy peace is sealed, thy rest is sure,
My sorrows are to come;
Awhile I weep and linger here,
Then follow to the tomb.

And is the awful veil withdrawn
That shrouds from mortal eyes,
In deep impenetrable gloom,
The secrets of the skies?

O, in some dream of visioned bliss,
Some trance of rapture show
Where, on the bosom of thy God,
Thou rest'st from human woe!

Thence may thy pure devotion's flame
On me, on me descend;
To me thy strong aspiring hopes,
Thy faith, thy fervour lend.

Let these my lonely path illume,
And teach my weakened mind
To welcome all that's left of good,
To all that's lost resigned.

Farewell! with honour, peace, and love,
Be thy dear memory blest!
Thou hast no tears for me to shed,
When I too am at rest.

The following extract from a letter of Sir James Mackintosh to Mrs. John Taylor of Norwich, must have reached England after Mr. Barbauld's tragical end. It cannot now be known whether it was ever seen by the mourner; but it may be taken for granted, that so kind and faithful a friend as Mrs. Taylor, would have communicated anything that might have soothed her feelings at such a time of distress.

"Bombay, 10th Oct., 1808.

If I had been a little more acquainted with Mrs. Barbauld, I should have written to her.* If I could have spoken any consolation, it would have been only payment of a long arrear of instruction and pleasure for thirty years. In another sense, it would have been but the payment of a debt. I could have said little, but what I learned from herself. If ever there was a writer whose wisdom is made to be useful in the time of need, it is Mrs. Barbauld. No moralist has ever more exactly touched the point of the greatest practicable purity, without being lost in exaggeration or sinking into meanness. She has cultivated a philosophy which will raise and animate her, without refining it to that degree, when it is no longer applicable to the gross purposes of human life, and when it is too apt to evaporate in hypocrisy and ostentation. Her observations on the moral of 'Clarissa,'

* On the aberration of intellect, under which her husband was then suffering.

are as fine a piece of mitigated and rational stoicism as our language can boast of: and she who has so beautifully taught us the folly of inconsistent expectations and complaints, can never want practical wisdom under the sharpest calamities. Mental disease is perhaps the subject on which topics of consolation are the most difficult to be managed. Yet I have been engaged since my arrival here in a very singular and not altogether unsuccessful correspondence with poor Hall, formerly of Cambridge, on the subject of his own insanity. With Mrs. B's firmer and calmer philosophy, I should think it easy to teach the imagination habitually to consider the evil only as a bodily disease, of which the mental disturbance is a mere symptom. That this habit deprives insanity of its mysterious horrors, is obvious enough from the instance of febrile delirium, which fills us with no more horror than any other morbid appearance, because we steadily and constantly consider it as an effect. The horrible character of the disease seems much to depend on its being consid-

ered as arising from some secret and mysterious change in the mind, which, by a sort of noble superstition, is exalted above vulgar corporeal organs. Whoever firmly regards it as the result of physical causes, will spare themselves much of this horror, and acquire the means of being useful to the sufferer. My advice may be useless, but I should wish my sympathy known to Mrs. Barbauld. It is the privilege of such excellent writers, to command the sympathy of the distant and unborn. It is a delightful part of their fame; and no writer is more entitled to it, than Mrs. Barbauld."

Mrs. Barbauld had the fortitude to seek relief from dejection in literary occupation, and incapable, as yet, of any stronger effort, she consented to edit in 1810, a collection of British Novelists, with an introductory essay, and biographical and critical notices prefixed to each author.

In the following year, she compiled for the use of young ladies, a collection of verse and prose in one volume, entitled the Female Speaker. She also resumed her correspondence with a few friends; some letters are given here.

To Mrs. Taylor.

"June 18th, 1810.

A thousand thanks for your kind letter; still more for the very short visit that preceded it—though short—too short, it has left indelible impressions on my mind;

my heart has truly had communion with yours—your sympathy has been balm to it; and I feel that there is no one *now* on earth to whom I could pour out that heart more readily, I may say so readily, as to yourself. Very good also has my dear amiable Mrs. Beecroft been to me, whose lively sweetness and agreeable conversation, has at times, won me to forget that my heart is heavy.

I am now sitting alone again, and feel like a person who has been sitting by a cheerful fire, not sensible at the time of the temperature of the air, but the fire removed, he finds the season is still *winter*. Day after day passes, and I do not know what to do with my time, my mind has no energy, nor power of application. I can tell you, however, what I have done with some hours of it, which have been agreeably employed in reading Mrs. Montagu's Letters. I think her nephew has made a very agreeable present to the public; and I was greatly edified to see them printed in modest octavo, with Mrs. Montagu's sweet face (for it is a very pretty face) at the head. They cer-

tainly show a very extraordinary mind, full of wit, and also of deep thought, and sound judgement. She seems to have liked, not a little, to divert herself with the odd and the ludicrous, and shows herself, in the earlier letters, passionately fond of races and balls: this was natural enough at eighteen. Perhaps you may not so easily pardon her for having early settled her mind, as she evidently had, not to marry except for an establishment. This seems to show a want of some of those fine feelings, that one expects in youth; but when it is considered that she was the daughter of a country gentleman with a large family, and no fortune to expect, and her connections all in high life, one is disposed to pardon her, especially as, I dare say, she would never have married a fool or a profligate. I heard her say—what I suppose very few can say—that she never was in love in her life. Many of the letters are in fact essays; and I think had she turned her thoughts to write in that way, she would have excelled Johnson.

I have also turned over Lamb's Speci-

mens of Old Plays, and am much pleased with them. I made a discovery there, that La Motte's fable of Genius, Virtue, and Reputation, which has been so much praised for its ingenious turn, is borrowed from Webster, an author of the age of Shakespeare; or they have taken it from some common source, for a Frenchman was not very likely to light upon an English poet of that age: they knew about as much of us then, as we did, fifty years ago, of the Germans. It is surprising how little invention there is in the world; no *very* good story was ever invented. It is perhaps originally some fact a little enlarged, then by some other hand embellished with circumstances, then by somebody else, a century after, refined, drawn to a point, and furnished with a moral. When shall we see the moral of the world's great story, which astonishes by its events, interests by the numerous agents it puts in motion, but of which we cannot understand the bearings, or predict the catastrophe? It is a tangled web, of which we have not the clue.

I do not know how to rejoice at this victory, splendid as it is, over Buonaparte, when I consider the horrible waste of life, the mass of misery, which such gigantic combats must occasion. I will think no more of it; let me rather contemplate your family; there the different threads all wind evenly, smoothly, and brightly."

To Miss Edgeworth.

"Stoke Newington,
September 5th, 1809.

My dear Madam,

I am much obliged to you for your permission to enrich the Selection of Novels with your 'Belinda' and 'Griselda,' and am quite of your opinion that the latter answers more truly to the definition than 'Castle Rackrent,' the high merit of which has given me a desire to lay hands upon it, as writers sometimes will strain a point to enrol a favorite character among their countrymen. I remember Mr. Senebier, in his account of the illustrious men of Geneva, reckons, first, those who were born and lived

there; then those who were born in the territory, but lived elsewhere; thirdly, those who lived at Geneva and were born in other countries, and, lastly, some of those if very eminent, who had made any *occasional stay* in the place. I mention it, that if you have a particular objection to be claimed by future generations for any country province you may take care not to go there. But to return to my Novels, from which I confess I have rambled somewhat unreasonably. As you wish them to be printed from your corrected copy, the Booksellers will be much obliged to you to send one as soon as may be convenient, as they wish now to set about printing in good earnest. To say the truth, the whole ought to have been out long ago, but the course of my thoughts and my whole mind has been so adverse for many months past, which you will not wonder at, to the engagement I had entered into, that I have sufficiently exercised the forbearance of the Booksellers. Let me now, my dear Miss Edgeworth, thank you for the very great pleasure which, in com-

mon with all who read, I have received from your new tales. I may not, to you, expatiate on the variety, the invention, the spirit, ever new and ever charming, of your various publications, but I may congratulate you on having so much power, and so much will to impress the heart with virtuous feelings, and by those modes of writing which are generally managed so as to enfeeble the mind, to gird it up for the real business and duties of life You may expect some striking Poetry soon from Montgomery,* I do not know whether he is a favourite of yours. I think Campbell has disappointed the public in his Gertrude, and I doubt if he will ever recover his ground. You know I presume, that Miss Hamond is with me, and I am gratified to find that she seems to be happy, as it also contributes to my comfort that I have one with me to break the solitude of my desolate house. I saw her brother yesterday, the high respect all the family have for you makes an interesting point of connexion between us. Miss

* James Montgomery.

Hamond says modestly that *she* is not your correspondent, and therefore hardly thought herself entitled to send her respects. I told her I should send them notwithstanding, and I have now not room for more than to add mine to Mr. and Mrs. Edgeworth, whose kindness I know. I am a poor correspondent, but should you ever feel inclined to bestow a line upon me, it would give me true pleasure. My Brother's family desires remembrances."

To Mrs. Barbauld.

"Edgeworthstown,
January 18th, 1810.

My dear Madam,

I have great pleasure in making a good beginning of this new year by fulfilling a request of your's. My brother Sneyd will have the honor of waiting upon you with 'Belinda.' I wish I could be of the party, but alas! this is quite out of my power. My father, thank God, has perfectly recovered his health and strength, but he is now engaged in an undertaking which will attach him for some time to the bogs of Ireland.

Sneyd will give you an account of the Commissioners for improving our bogs; and pray ask him for a history of the moving bog in our neighbourhood, of the wonders of which he has been an eye witness. I would tell you of these, but that he can tell in five minutes what I could not write in five. So to return to my own business. 'Belinda' I have taken some, and my father has taken a great deal of pains, to improve her. In the first volume, the alterations are very slight, and merely verbal. In the second volume, '*Jackson*' is substituted for the husband of Lucy instead of '*Juba*,' many people having been scandalised at the idea of a black man marrying a white woman; my father says that gentlemen have horrors upon this subject, and would draw conclusions very unfavorable to a female writer who appeared to recommend such unions; as I do not understand the subject, I trust to his better judgment, and end with—for Juba read Jackson.

In the third volume, I have taken out everything that gave encouragement (be-

yond esteem) to Mr. Vincent, for great complaints were made against Belinda for want of constancy to Clarence Hervey, and for jilting Vincent. By taking out her consent to marry, I hope I shall in some degree, satisfy all parties. Belinda is but an uninteresting personage after all, but I cannot *mend* her in this respect, without making her over again—and indeed without making the whole book over again. I was not either in Belinda or Leonora sufficiently aware that the *goodness* of a heroine interests only in proportion to the perils and trials to which it is exposed.

I have been made still more sensible of my own deficiencies, by just reading the 'Simple Story,' which throughout has such a powerful, irresistible, interest. I hope you think of it as I do, that it is one of the most pathetic tales that ever was written.

I long, my dear madam, to see your *prefaces** and wish for your sake as well as for that of the public, that they were finished; for I know how any unfulfilled engagement

* To Mrs. Barbauld's Edition of the British Novelists.

of that sort presses upon the mind.

What a loss, what an irreparable loss we have had of our excellent friend Johnson ;* ask Sneyd to tell you how generously, how kindly, he behaved to us in the last act almost of his life. I think the excellent character of him which appeared in the Star could have come from none but such a writer and such a friend as Mrs. Barbauld. I am glad to hear that Johnson's habits of liberality did not injure his fortune, and that his property descends to a representative so worthy of him as Mr. Miles. Ask Sneyd also how Mr. Miles behaved towards us. I know you have pleasure in hearing of instances of virtue in whatever class or rank of life.

I do not know whether you received a letter I wrote you some time ago, about a son of Mrs. Priscilla Wakefield, Mr. Edward W. who has spent some time with us. The idle stories which have been in circulation about him and which originated, as I firmly believe, only in the imprudence or malice of some young ladies have died away, and

* Mr. Johnson the Publisher.

people are coming round to our opinion of him. I wish to have this supported however by your testimony in his favour.

I beg you will say every thing that is kind for me to Miss H. Hamond, who I hope continues with you, that is the best wish I can form for her improvement and happiness. I hope her brother is well, and engaged in some fixed pursuit, commercial or literary or both. Mrs. Edgeworth and my father beg their kind respects to you.

Believe me, dear Madam,

Your obliged and affectionate

MARIA EDGEWORTH."

1810.

"Dear Miss Edgeworth,

I feel myself very faulty towards you in not having written before, when I have many things to thank you for, and many things to say. It has in part been owing to the expecting the corrected copy of 'Griselda,' as it has not been sent, I imagine you have no corrections to make, and I find the Printers, without my know-

ledge, have presumed so far on that supposition as to proceed to the printing, but they desired me to say they would cancel anything you wished, if they have notice time enough. I hope however you have no alterations, I am sure I cannot discern that it wants any. We have read with great pleasure Mr. Edgeworth's work.* You and he, who are all candour, encourage me to criticise it, and had I felt that I had anything to offer which would be of service, I might have been presumptuous enough to attempt the task, but indeed I had not. There is only one passage which struck me as particularly objectionable in the detail, *that* is partly obviated by a note, and in another Edition Mr. Edgeworth will probably alter it in such a manner as to prevent misconstruction. You will perhaps guess that I mean the passage where the Gauls (as I recollect, I have not the book to refer to) are mentioned as exciting the courage of their youth by allowing them to torment their prisoners. But tho' my penny arrows

* Practical Education.

of criticism, if I were inclined to shoot them, would recoil blunted and harmless against the book considered as a composition, I do not say that I can quite agree with the author with respect to the leading idea, the devoting a child from its birth to a particular profession. I fear the expectations of the present would be often disappointed, from the alteration in his own circumstances which fifteen or sixteen years is likely to produce; few ever remain in the same position, except gentlemen of estates for that space of time, they are richer or poorer, they have changed their residences and got into other connections, a relation will introduce their child into his business, &c. How can a young couple entering life, with their fortune to make, uncertain of success and whether their family be large or small, devote from its birth, their first child to any particular profession. They can only determine, as they generally do, that it shall be very clever and very successful and rise very high in whatever it undertakes. The cradle is rocked by Hope, but her bright

visions can scarcely take any determinate form. Then with regard to the child, his health, the gradual development of his faculties, impressions made accidentally will favour or counteract the views of his parents, and circumstances will operate over which they have no controul. A friend of mine says she is sure her son was determined to the law by seeing Counsellor Mingay, who lived next door to them, coming home every evening with his green bag, which he imagined was full of money. I should be afraid also, where the plan succeeded, of producing a regard too exclusive for a particular walk of life. I should have supposed the paths of life did not divide so soon. Let the young colt run freely about for a while before the blinkers are put on, which must, alas, when he is put to real service confine his eyes to one unvarying straightforward path, for the remainder of his life.

But from all these saucy remarks which you have encouraged me to make on the work of one so infinitely better acquainted with life and manners than myself, do you

conclude that I wish the book unwritten or altered? Certainly not. In this as in all great questions let men of abilities write, and write strongly, on the side that strikes them; by this collision the truth will be struck out. A part of a system is often practicable where the whole may not be so, and the reader, from various views of various authors, strikes out a medium which would be insipid in the authors themselves, but may best suit his particular case. Alas! how have we been disappointed on this side the water by the failure of your proposed expedition to England. How fondly did I cherish the hopes of seeing you; I will foster the idea that it is only delayed, and I hope the state of Mr. Edgeworth's health will allow me to do so. Everybody here has been reading with great avidity 'The Lady of the Lake,' and there are two parties about it. One that extol it above anything the author has written, another that pretends it is made up of shreds and patches from his former poems. For my own part I pretend not to decide whether it exceeds or

falls short of the fancy of his former Poems, but I am sure it has most beautiful passages, and I admire the fertility of genius and the wonderful rapidity with which, in so short a period, he has poured out three Poems of so much bulk as well as beauty. Have you read my Niece's Poem ?* I dare venture to predict that you will be pleased with it, and I hope the gentlemen will allow that the partiality of a woman to her sex has not led her to assume more importance for them than fairly belongs to them.

She begins to feel a little of the trepidation about the Reviews, very natural in a young author, but you, my dear Miss Edgeworth, I hope, feel yourself quite above them. You cannot be judged by them, *they* may be judged by their strictures upon you. I had not seen the Quarterly before you mentioned it. I then read it with great indignation indeed, nor could I help venting a little of it, as much as I thought would do good, in a paper, which perhaps you saw in the

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* Epistles on Women by Lucy Aikin.

Gentleman's Magazine. Write on, shine out, and defy them."

"Edgeworthstown,
August 1st, 1810.

My dear Mrs. Barbauld,

Your kind and delightful letter gave us all peculiar pleasure, not only from its kindness and the highly gratifying expressions of a regard, which we *know to be sincere*, but from its proving to us that your mind has resumed all its energy, and that you have recovered from that cruel and unavoidable depression of spirits. You can hardly know unless you were with us, my dear Mrs. B., how much we rejoiced at this, nor how earnestly we desire to add, if we could, to your happiness. Why cannot you cross this vile sea, and be with us in a week? Look at the frank of this letter. With pride I bid you look and see that it is franked by your pupil Lord Selkirk, a pupil who does you the greatest honor, a pupil who sets you the best example too, for this

is his second visit to Edgeworthstown.—And you!

Lord Selkirk begs me to remember him to you in the most respectful and kind manner, and I am sure you will be glad to hear that he seems in perfect health and happiness. His arrival, and that of a succession of visitors, prevented my finishing the errata for Griselda as soon as I wished, and must now be my apology for sending them to you in their blotted and blurred state, for I really have not time this day to copy them, and I fear to delay your printer.

Your observations on Professional Education, are as solid as they are elegantly expressed. My father thanks you for them with his whole head and heart. He is correcting the book for a second Edition, and he will avail himself of your remarks about the impossibility in some classes of life of the parents early deciding the child's profession.

I thank you my kind and able defender for the essay in the Gentleman's Magazine. May it ever be my fate to be so attacked

and so defended. We did not know the Essay was written by you, but the moment we read it we were struck, not only with its strength and ability, but with its judicious zeal, and we settled that it must be written by some *friend* who was warmly and personally interested for us.

Can you suppose that any one in this house could see an advertisement of a book of Miss Aikin's without immediately sending for it? But alas! you little know how long it is before our impatience to see new publications can be gratified. In the centre of Ireland we wait sometimes months before we can get possession of the books we long for. We have not yet the Lady of the Lake *of our own*, though we have begged and borrowed her, and though we wrote for her the moment we heard that she was about to appear in the world. For 'Epistles on Women' we wrote at the same time, and again, and again, and again! And now we have forbid Sneyd, who is coming over, to appear before us, unless he brings it with him, or unless he sends it (as I have

desired him till I am hoarse) under cover, to Edward Connor, Esq., Dublin Castle. What has prevented his doing this, I cannot imagine, and really wish I could beat him for it.

We have not yet given up all hopes of seeing you in England. My father talks of going to London in spring, but I dare not feed my fancy on these 'pictured tales of bright heroic deeds.' I know this however, for certain, that if we do reach London ever again, nothing *can* prevent our having the pleasure of seeing you, and hearing you. My father has quite recovered his health, and is as busy in the vast Hibernian bogs as possible. I don't know whether he will improve *them*, but I am sure they have improved *him*, for the air and exercise have quite renovated him. Mrs. Edgeworth sends her real love to you, which I assure you, she never sends, as words of course, to any body. She is again in blooming health, and her darling little Francis repays her for all she has suffered for him. He has all his father's liveliness of look and quick-

ness of motion, and he is without exception, the best humored little mortal of his years, of his months I mean, that I ever saw. He is now *crowing* and dancing at the window, looking out at his sisters who are making hay. I am much inclined to believe that he has a natural genius—for happiness—in other words, as Sydney Smith would say, great hereditary ' constitutional joy.'

I am very well, and have been very idle lately, but intend to be industrious. I have however begun a story on *Patronage* and wish I could talk with you about it for half an hour or even five minutes. It is so vast a subject that it flounders about in my hands and overpowers me. I have also written a preface and notes (for I too will be an editor) for a little book which a very worthy country-woman of mine is going to publish—Mrs. Leadbeater, grand-daughter to Burke's first preceptor—She is poor—She has behaved most handsomely about some letters of Burke's to her grand-father and herself. It would have been advantageous to her to publish them, but as Mrs. Burke (Heaven

knows why) objected, she desisted. The Bishop of Meath afterwards persuaded Mrs. B. that the letters w^d be highly honorable to Burke's memory, and Mrs. B. retracted and gave her permission, but Mrs. Leadbeater, who is a very scrupulous quaker, conceived that having once *promised* not to publish them during Mrs. Burke's life, she should not break this promise. This perhaps is a foolish delicacy but it is a fault on the right side. The book she is now going to publish, 'Cottage Dialogues,' will be, I hope, for Ireland, what the Cottagers of Glenburnie are for Scotland—*minus* the humor of the cottagers. I do not pretend to say that the dialogues are equal in humor or ability to Mrs. Hamilton's book, but I think they will do as much good in this country as her's did in Scotland. And they give such an excellent picture of the modes of living of the lower Irish, that I am in hopes they will interest in England. Of this she, poor modest simple creature, had not the least hope or idea till we suggested it. We took her M.S. out of the hands of an Irish

publisher, and our excellent friend's worthy successor in St. Paul's Church Yard has on our recommendation agreed to publish it for her. She accepts from me a preface and notes for the mere English reader.

Adieu my dear Mrs. Barbauld, abruptly, but most sincerely, and affectionately,

Your obliged,

MARIA EDGEWORTH."

It was soon after her removal to Stoke Newington that Mrs. Barbauld made the acquaintance of one whose active kindness and animated and interesting conversation brightened many of her lonely hours. Mr. Henry Crabb Robinson's own characteristic account of his introduction to her is given here.

" I formed a new acquaintance of which I was reasonably proud and in the recollection of which I still rejoice. At Hackney I saw repeatedly Miss Wakefield, a charming girl (eldest daughter of the Rev. Gilbert Wakefield,) and one day at a party where Mrs. Barbauld had been the subject of con-

versation, and I had spoken of her in enthusiastic terms, Miss Wakefield came to me and said 'Would you like to know Mrs. Barbauld?' I exclaimed 'you might as well ask me whether I should like to know the Angel Gabriel!' 'Mrs. Barbauld is however much more accessible, I will introduce you to her nephew.' She then called to Charles Aikin whom she soon after married; and he said 'I dine every Sunday with my aunt at Stoke Newington, and I am expected always to bring a friend with me. Two knives and forks are laid for me. Will you go with me next Sunday?' Gladly acceding to the proposal, I had the good fortune to make myself agreeable, and soon became intimate in the house. Mrs. Barbauld bore the remains of great personal beauty. She had a brilliant complexion, light hair, blue eyes, a small and elegant figure, and her manners were very agreeable, with something of the generation then departing. She received me very kindly, spoke of my aunt, and said she had once slept at my father's house. Mrs. Barbauld

is so well known by her writings that it is needless for me to attempt to characterize her. In the estimation of Wordsworth she was the first of our literary women, and he was not bribed to this judgement by any especial congeniality of feeling. I may here relate an anecdote connecting her and Wordsworth, though out of its proper time by many years; but it is so good that it ought to be preserved from oblivion.

It was after her death, that Lucy Aikin published Mrs. Barbauld's works, of which I gave a copy to Miss Wordsworth. Among the poems, is a stanza on Life,* written in extreme old age. It had delighted my sister, to whom I repeated it on her deathbed. It was long after I gave these works to Miss Wordsworth, that her brother said, 'Repeat me that stanza by Mrs. Barbauld.' I did so. He made me repeat it again; and so he learned it by heart. He was at the time walking in his sitting room, at Rydal, with his hands behind him, and I heard him mutter to himself 'I am not in the habit

* In the Appendix.

of grudging people their good things, but I wish I had written those lines.'

> Life, we've been long together
> Through pleasant and through cloudy weather."

Mr. Robinson also mentions taking Wordsworth to meet Mrs. Barbauld at a party at Mr. C. R. Aikin's, at which, though rather a large one, he himself and the hostess* were the only persons in the room who were not authors. He at another time took his friend Charles Lamb† and his sister

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*Her daughter may be allowed here to record the opinion passed upon her by Mr. Wordsworth, in writing to Mr. Robinson. "I have never been well since that evening, yet I am content to pay this price for the knowledge of so pleasing a person as Mrs. Charles Aikin, being quite an enthusiast, when I find a woman whose countenance and manners are what a woman's ought to be."

Her family lost her soon after, by a rapid attack of fever, leaving them desolate, and her youngest child an unweaned infant.

†Another friend of Mr. Robinson's, an enthusiastic young American, came one day with a letter of introduction. He was shewn, for a few minutes, into a room where the table was laid for dinner, and wishing to preserve some memorial of his visit, he took some salt out of a saltcellar, and put it into his pocket. He repeated this anecdote himself at Dr. Aikin's, when Mrs. A., who was rather deaf, understood him to say, he had put the *saltcellar* into his pocket, which being

to spend an afternoon with Mrs. Barbauld. She, as well as Dr. Aikin and his daughter, did early justice to Lamb's genius.

At the end of the year 1811, a very gloomy period, Mrs. Barbauld wrote a poem bearing that name, which unfortunately reflected too much of the despondency of her own mind, and drew down many severe remarks, notwithstanding the beauty of the verse. Mr. Robinson says "Dear Mrs. Barbauld this year incurred great reproach, by writing a poem entitled 1811. It prophesies that on some future day, a traveller from the Antipodes will, from a broken arch of Blackfriars' Bridge, contem-

a rather handsome old-fashioned silver one, she was filled with wonder at this trait of American manners, till her mistake being happily discovered, was rectified, amid the merriment of the party.

plate the ruin of St. Pauls.* This was written more in sorrow than in anger; but there was a disheartening and even gloomy tone, which I, even with all my love for her, could not quite excuse. It provoked a very coarse review in the Quarterly, which many years after, Murray told me, he was more ashamed of than any other article in the review."

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* Mr. Robinson must have had in his mind a similar passage in Macaulay's works, but the following is an extract from Mrs. Barbauld's Poem "1811". Must not this have suggested Lord Macaulay's celebrated "New Zealander" on the ruined arch of Blackfriars' Bridge?

"Yet then the ingenuous youth whom Fancy fires
With pictured glories of illustrious sires,
With duteous zeal, their pilgrimage shall take,
From the Blue Mountains, or Ontario's Lake;
With fond adoring steps to press the sod
By statesmen, sages, poets, heroes trod.
* * * * * * *
But who, their mingled feelings shall pursue,
When London's faded glories rise to view?
* * * * * * *
Pensive and thoughtful shall the wanderers greet
Each splendid square, and still, untrodden street;
Or of some crumbling turret, mined by time,
The broken stairs with perilous step shall climb,
Thence stretch their view the wide horizon round,
By scattered hamlets trace its ancient bound,
And choked no more with fleets, fair Thames survey
Through reeds and sedge, pursue his idle way."

Miss Edgeworth says, "I cannot describe to you the indignation, or rather the disgust, that we felt at the manner in which you are treated in the Quarterly Review, so ungentlemanlike, so unjust, so insolent a review I never read. My father and I, in the moment of provocation, snatched up our pens to answer it, but a minute's reflection convinced us, that silent contempt is the best answer—that we should not suppose it possible, that it can hurt anybody with the generous British public, but the reviewers themselves. The lines even which they have picked out with most malicious intent, are excellent, and speak for themselves. But it is not their criticism on your poem which incenses me, it is the odious tone in which they dare to speak of the most respectable and elegant female writer that England can boast. The public, the *public* will do you justice!"

This was the last time she appeared in print. No one indeed, who loved her, could have wished her to be again exposed to such a shock to her feelings, or such cruel

misunderstanding of her sentiments. The remainder of her life was passed quietly at Stoke Newington, among her family and a few friends. From her nephew Charles, she received all the duty and affection of a son, and in the great sorrow of his life, her kindness to him and his motherless children, was unremitting.

One of the few journies she again took, was to her old friends Dr. and Mrs. Estlin, near Bristol, from whose house she visited Mrs. Hannah More.

She writes to Dr. Aikin.

Bristol.

"Dear Brother,

I thank you for your kind letter, and hope soon to return to the dear circle, for indeed it is quite time I should turn my thoughts homeward. I cannot, however, at present fix the day, but I believe it will be the latter end of next week. Mr. Belsham, I have reason to think, will not come into this part of the country, and my friends here will not let me go without some acquaintance.

We continue to have very fine weather here. It has rained one evening and the ensuing night, and I think that is all the rain we have had since I came here. We had a very pleasant day last Monday at Ham Green. Mr. Bright has greatly enlarged the house, and done it with so much judgment, that you do not perceive it was not all built at once, and he has opened the view, so that you see the river and the vessels from the drawing room. I wished my sister there to see a fine magnolia in full bloom, with many other fine plants and trees. The finest plants, however, are the olive branches round his table, there seems to be the greatest confidence and harmony through all the family. Miss Bright is a very excellent young woman, and employs herself very much among the poor. There is an abominable practice here, which is that of building high stone walls, by way of enclosure, which shut out the view from the road; this they have done great part of the way to Mr. Bright's.

You ask me how my visit to Mrs. More's

went off. Very pleasantly indeed. Nothing could be more friendly than their reception, and nothing more charming than their situation. An extensive view over the Mendip hills is in front of their house, with the pretty view of Wrington. Their house (cottage, because it is thatched,) stands on the declivity of a rising ground, which they have planted and made quite a little paradise. The five sisters, all good old maids, have lived together these fifty years, without any break having been made in their little community, by death, or any other cause of separation. Hannah More is a good deal broken by illness, but possesses fully her powers of conversation, and her vivacity. We exchanged riddles like the wise men of old. I was given to understand she is writing something. Hannah had read with great pleasure your Selden and Usher, and thought it very *liberal*.

I have had great pleasure in congratulating my good friends here, on a legacy of three thousand pounds, which has been left them by an old scholar. John Estlin too

has five hundred. Dr. Stock, five thousand.

I hope you will go on with your plan of Biography. I like it much, and here is a subject for you in Bristol; a Quaker, Mr. Reynolds, who they say gives away ten thousand a year; he lives very plainly himself.

Love to the Kinders and my sister.

Your ever affectionately

A. L. Barbauld."

To Miss Edgeworth.

"Stoke Newington,

August 23rd, 1816.

Dear Madam,

Will you permit me to address you, conscious as I am, that I have neglected the advantage and the honour of that intercourse by letter, which my heart all the while acknowledged in its fullest extent. What an excellent and what a cruel piece is your 'To-morrow!' How you could enter so well into feelings which your activity and strength of mind must have hindered you from partaking, I cannot imagine, but

to me it has given many a twinge of conscience, and most particularly in the affair of letter writing which, if I have happened to delay a little too long, always becomes difficult to me beyond imagination, Days pass, and the more honour and esteem I have for my correspondent, the more I feel that I have nothing worth communicating and my brain feels dry, *as the remaining biscuit after a voyage*. With regard to yourself, though longing to write, I doubt if I should have had the courage, but for a hint communicated by Mrs. Joanna Baillie intimating that I might have taken amiss not seeing more of you when you were in London. Oh my dear Miss Edgeworth, I cannot bear you should think so for a moment. Much as I value your society, I well know the demands on your time, I know the homage paid you and I exulted in it for your sake and for my sex's sake. And now will you forgive me? Will you now receive all the acknowledgment I owe you, both in common with all those who have been delighted and instructed by your

charming works, and more particularly as having received them from your hands. Long may you continue to delight the world with livelier wit and humour than those who write merely for amusement, and with juster and more impressive sentiments of morality than most of those who write merely for instruction. I should ask you if you could resist the general spirit of migration and stay at home when England is pouring itself over the continent, if I did not hear, and very sorry I am to hear it, that Mr. Edgeworth's state of health is such as must prevent your leaving him. I tremble to think what tours must be preparing for the press, what sweeping characters of nations will be given by the traveller who has dined two or three times at a table d'hôte, and how often we shall be sick between Dover and Calais. I am wishing to lay a tax on English Absentees, not the tourist of a few months, but the Nobleman who dismisses his servants, shuts up his mansion, and spends his vast rents abroad. Pray have you any summer in

Ireland? We have not; a sweeping, chilling, hope disappointing summer, if we must call it such, but that it might not entirely want energy, we have had, it seems, an earthquake in Scotland. A summer without heat, is like a youth without affections, there is nothing to cheer the damp and dreary season which succeeds it. I have myself felt much want of some enlivening influence, to counteract the langour of age, and the dreariness of a solitary house. Writing anything I have not felt equal to, and reading has at times been a task to me, but at present I feel better. Every one here has not been so idle. Perhaps you have seen my brother's *Annals*, and though necessarily somewhat dry, from the necessary compression of such an eventful period, I think you will have been pleased with the fairness and impartiality, with which they are written. My niece, Miss Aikin, has made some progress in her 'Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth.' She is taking great pains with it, and I hope it will answer her expectation and her friends'.

We are expecting every day another Canto of 'Childe Harold,' but I apprehend the author has lost too much of the public favour, by his late cruel behaviour to his wife, to be as popular as he has been. I have now upon my table, the strangest Poem 'Wilson's City of the Plague,' a heap of horrors, natural and moral; and 'Leigh Hunt's Rimini,' the most fantastic. Thus it is, when the natural and easy, has become a beaten path, and the intellectual taste wants excitement, as the sensitive, by more pungent, relishes the originally disagreeable. My dear Madam, have I not tired you? Will you forgive me? Will you love me, little as I may deserve it? Will you convey my respectful compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Edgeworth, and best wishes for all your family, and will you believe me, with the highest esteem, and most affectionate good wishes.

Your ever obliged,

A. L. Barbauld.

I beg you to believe that I have written this upon the 'knees of my heart.'"

To Mrs. Barbauld.

1816.

"My dear Madam,

My sight has lately been so much impaired, as to prevent me from writing with my own hand; I have, however, such a number of good secretaries, as to prevent me from feeling much inconvenience from this circumstance; and I now and then derive a peculiar pleasure in using my pen, upon some extraordinary occasion, to assure a friend of the continuance of my regard. Maria is very timid:—though she ought to have been satisfied, as I was, with the consciousness of feeling undiminished affection and esteem for you. She feared that you might have been hurt, by the hurried manner in which she saw you at Newington.

You were too wise, and too kind, to attribute the shortness of her visit, to any thing but necessity. Indeed the tenor of our lives shows that we value the friendship of the wise and good, instead of courting the notice of the great. In London we certainly met a most flattering reception;

but it has not tempted us to renew our visit. We are perfectly happy in absolute retirement, and we have not the least desire to rush into the continental vortex.

Your letter, my dear Madam, gave me a kind of satisfaction, that is perhaps allied to vanity; but it was a proof of what I have often asserted that 'I never lost a friend in my life.'

I do not pretend to have made many, but it is a real pleasure to know that I have lost none.

We have sent for Dr. Aikin's Annals, which we never heard of till now.

Believe me to be sincerely yours,

RICHD. LOVELL EDGEWORTH."

"My dear Mrs. Barbauld,

Your kind, warm, friendly letter, has set my heart at ease, upon a subject which has long been very painful to me. I feared, and I could not bear to think, that I had lost that place in your esteem and affection, with which I knew that you once honoured me. I could not bear the

idea, that you suspected me of being so weak, so vain, so senseless, as to have my brain turned by a little fashionable flattery, and to have so changed my character, as not to feel the difference between *your friendship*, and the common-place compliments of *Lady This* and *That and T'other*. Your letter has dissipated all the very painful fancies, and real fears that have been growing and preying upon me these two years. Thank you—'*on the knees of my heart*' I thank you. And be assured that your condescension and goodness, in begging my pardon, when I ought to have begged, and did a hundred times in my secret soul beg yours, is not thrown away upon me.

So we will now go on where we left off, too long ago. I will write whenever I have anything to say that I wish to say to you, whether it be worth your hearing or not; and if you do not answer me, I will only *regret*, I promise you I will never be angry, nor will I ever more fret myself, with the notion, that you are angry with me. God

bless Mrs. Baillie, for breaking the ice between us.

You have no idea how long, how terribly long, it is, before books of any substantial merit, reach this remote ultimate Edgeworthstown. Such trash as 'Glenarvon' and such mischief as 'Bertram' comes too fast, poisoning all the wind. We have book societies in the country, and do order books of merit and reputation; but it is a tedious time before the Dublin booksellers get them, as they dare not write for them on their own account. I shall immediately bespeak Dr. Aikin's Annals for our society. We shall anxiously expect Miss Aikin's Reign of Elizabeth. Have you seen a book of Dr. Millar's, on the Philosophy of History? The introductory chapter is well done, but I fear there is a *vice de construction* in the plan of the book. The witty, bitterly witty, Plunket told him, that with such a plan, he should not have published the book, *till the day of Judgment.* His plan, you know, is to shew, that all history forms a moral drama. Now, till the drama is finished,

how can he come to the moral, and without omniscience, how can he see the connexion of the parts and the whole.

I have lately seen a poem, which reminded me of the *spirit* of your '1811.' I do not mean to say in the versification, for that is unharmonious, and often defective, but I admire in it the noble spirit of patriotism and virtue. His *classical taste* and *Anti-Byron* principles. The poem I mean is '*Greece*' by Mr. Haygarth. I know nothing of him, but I think if he cultivates his interests, he may either become a fine historian, or a fine tragedian. This praise implies a great range of mind, but I do not say he is—I say he may become—all this, —and I should very much wish to know whether you think the same.

On the contrary, I do not think that the author of 'Bertram,'* though he has written a successful tragedy, will ever write a good tragedy—feeling run mad!—

As to 'Glenarvon,' it surely can *do* no mischief, it is such nonsense. I stuck fast

* The Rev. R. C. Maturin.

in the blood and love in the second volume, and in that condition, fell fast asleep, and never would have opened my eyes on the third volume, but that my father begged me to read the death of the Princess of Madagascar, which seems, with all that relates to the Princess, to be written by a pen, much superior to Lady Caroline Lamb's.—Who wrote it? Is it known?

We have just got a little book called 'Display,' a tale for young people, which we like much. It is written by the daughter of a physician, a Miss Jane Taylor, who keeps a school near Dublin. I am not acquainted with her. The *good* people in this book, are more to my taste, than those in Cœlebs, because they are not so meddling. I only wish they had not objected to young people going to balls. Before I could finish my sentence, in praise of all the good sense and excellent writing of this tale, a circle of young and old ladies were open-mouthed with the question,—but why object to balls? I hope you like the Antiquary. And I hope you have no doubt of its having been written by Walter Scott.

We have just received two numbers of a new 'Journal of the Arts and Sciences,' edited at the Royal Institution of Great Britain. Like it much. Glad to see Sir Humphrey Davy's lamp lighting him back to the paths of Science, from the bootless excursion he took into the land of fashion. Better be the first, than the last of a class. Better be the first man of science, than the last man of fashion.—Especially as he can be the one, and cannot be the other.

In the first number of this Journal, there is a paper, by Dr. Park, on the laws of sensation, which my father admires very much.

I think the *nerves* will give physicians and philosophers, enough to do for the next century. The *humorers* have had their day.

Here is a gentleman in our neighbourhood, who one year imagines himself to be without bones, and another year without muscles, and one year is a Harry-long-legs, and another a man; and all the time, eats and drinks heartily, and wears a coat like other men, and is not considered as *more* than nervous.

I will now finish, lest you should repent having let loose my pen upon you. My father has been better lately; but his health is far from strong. I say as little as I can upon this subject, it is too near my heart. Mrs. Edgeworth is in as blooming, happy, and useful health as when you knew her at Clifton.

I wish, my dear Mrs. Barbauld, I could transport you into this large cheerful family, where every body,—from little Pakenham at four years old, to the old housekeeper, 'eldest of forms,' would do every-thing in their power to make you feel quite at home. You should never see any washing-day* but *one*.

Your friend, Lord Longford, has just written us word that he is going to be married, and from his own and the impartial account of his dear sister—(commonly called the Duchess of Wellington), the lady he has chosen will not only permanently please himself but satisfy the anxious

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* A playful poem of Mrs. B's given in the Appendix.

wishes of his host of family friends. She is Lady Georgina Lygon, tenth daughter of Lord Beauchamp. He says she will not permit him to be an 'absentee', so we shall now have him again settled at Pakenham Hall, within ten miles of us. Now, my dear Mrs. Barbauld, could not you summon up resolution enough to be sea sick for six hours, say ten at the utmost, to make us happy, and I hope yourself, for as many months! I have two brothers now at Cheltenham, Lovell and Sneyd, both known to you, both coming over to Ireland, Mrs. Sneyd E. also—could you not come with them? Anna (Mrs. Beddoes) also coming in the spring.

Think of what has been said! and do not tremble at the thoughts of my pestering you often with such long letters, for I assure you it is not my habit, but in the warmth of heart kindled by your warm affectionate letter all this poured out.

Your affectionate, obliged
and grateful friend,
MARIA EDGEWORTH."

To Miss Edgeworth.

" Dear Madam,

I am penetrated with your kindness, your frank forgiveness and the valued favour of your long letter. For your kind invitation too I sincerely thank you, nor could anything be more attractive than the society to which you invite me, not to mention the attraction of a country, interesting, and to me new, but indeed I am now too old to travel, or shall I rather say, I expect to take a journey longer than that, and to a country more unknown. Short excursions indeed I do not disclaim, and am now just returned from a visit to Mr. W. Smith * of Parndon, whose family I believe you know. He is now one of the oldest members of the House of Commons that we have, and has always been very steady to his principles, but he was then as busy as an old Roman in getting in his harvest. Patty Smith, the eldest and most accomplished, is in very indifferent health, I am sorry to say. My brother is delighted

* Mr. William Smith M.P. for Norwich.

that you are pleased with Mr. Haygarth's Poem, for the author is the son of a very intimate friend of his, a Physician, who died lately at Bath, or rather near it, and left his son in circumstances to indulge all his elegant tastes without being confined to any profession; he is now again upon his travels. I think his Poem elegant and beautiful, but you will excuse my differing from you, if I say that I should rather reverse the character you give of his genius, and the author of Bertram; for Haygarth seems to me to have already attained nearly the acme of his, grace, elegance, classic taste; but in Bertram, along with much that is dark, wild, and repulsive, equally to taste and moral sense, I think I see sparks of a high genius and more capabilities of improvement—*Au reste*, pray do not reproach us with sending you 'Bertram,' you sent it us. I have not seen Dr. Millar's publication, but I can hardly allow to Plunket that in a good Drama you must wait for the conclusion before you can form *any* opinion of the

catastrophe of the piece. We judge by the bearings. Who doubts long before the conclusion of the piece, that Desdemona's innocence will become apparent, and Othello die in agonies of remorse, but in the great Drama of the Universe, the difficulty is to see the *bearings*. Turner in his History of the Anglo-Saxons, a work of great research, has attempted something of this kind, but I think without much success. 'Display' we sent for on your recommendation, and are much pleased with a good deal of it, but we are entirely of your opinion with regard to balls, and indeed there is a great deal in her system that I should object to, particularly the doctrine, which I think a very pernicious one, that all, the innocent and good as well as the bad, must undergo a mysterious change before they are in a safe state. Emily was very good for aught that I could see before her conversion. I trembled, as I drew near the close, lest Elizabeth should have a fine fortune left her by somebody, and was much pleased with the author's good sense in handing

her to her post behind the counter. By the way, are you not mistaken in the Author? We take it to be the production of *Jane Taylor* of *Ongar*, who has written several pieces, both verse and prose, for children. I am just entering on 'Mrs. Marcet's Conversations on Political Economy,' a new subject for a Lady's pen. You are I believe personally acquainted with Mr. Roscoe, I send you the enclosed sonnet to show how well he bears the bitter deprivation, to a man of letters and of taste, of his noble collection of books and paintings. Among the curiosities of literature let me ask if you have seen the Rimini of Leigh Hunt? An author, who, in exaggeration of all the slovenliness of the new school, has thought proper to come into public with his neckcloth untied and his stockings about his heels.

My dear Miss Edgeworth, though I shall never see, I enjoy your account of Edgeworthstown. I do not conceive a more agreeable abode, and beg to be remembered to every individual of it. I rejoice much in

the approaching happiness of Lord Longford and the more because, if he is what he was, I believe him fully qualified to appreciate and enjoy domestic pleasures. If he is so good as to remember me pay my compliments. My nephew Arthur Aikin and his friends have been in the bustle of canvassing for some weeks past. He is soliciting for the situation of *Secretary to the Society of Arts*,* vacant by the death of Mr. Taylor, and with a very fair prospect of success. He has sixteen hundred members to canvass and being naturally rather taciturn and very modest, we have been amused to think how he would acquit himself, but he says he improves in assurance every day. In point of literary and scientific merit, none of the candidates can pretend to stand a comparison with him. My dear Miss Edgeworth, if I did as I ought to do, I should write this bad scrawl, full of blunders, over again, but then I should lose my

* He held this office for twenty years, and that of Chemical Lecturer of Guy's Hospital for almost as long a time afterwards. A short notice of him by his sister Lucy Aikin, will be found in the Appendix.

frank, so you must excuse it, and believe me ever your obliged, affectionate,

A. L. Barbauld."

September 17th, 1817.

To Mr. Rogers.

"Dear Sir,

My Brother and Sister as well as myself are very truly sensible of the favour of your invitation, nor are we insensible of the entertainment* which Monday evening will afford, notwithstanding which we must with sincere thanks decline so tempting an offer. With regard to Lucy, whose youth and spirits would best have borne the fatigue of such a day, or rather night, and might have communicated enjoyment as well as received it, she is at Liverpool. Suffer me to add with regard to myself, I feel sensibly touched with the *kindness* which prompted you to think of me on this occasion, distant as I am from you, and little able as I feel myself to return by *mine* the pleasure I

* The fireworks and illuminations for the Peace with France.

always receive from *your* company. I have another instance of attention from you which has for some time demanded my thanks, a most elegant little poem,* which as its parent did not choose to own it, was left to disclose its parentage by its merits. You scorn to take advantage of the fame you are in possession of, and choose to surprise the admiration you might command. I hope this is an earnest of more, and as I see you can with readiness take any style and manner you please, I shall be upon the watch for you whenever I see anything particularly elegant.

Adieu dear Sir, and believe me no one is more desirous of your esteem or sensible to your friendship than your obliged and faithful,

A. L. Barbauld.

Excuse blunders, I write with children about me."

She received about this time a visit from one who seems to form a link with the

* Jacqueline.

succeeding age, Dr. Channing, who alludes to it in a letter to Miss Aikin after Mrs. Barbauld's death.

"Boston, Feb. 27th, 1827.

I thank you, as thousands have done for your tribute to the memory of Mrs. Barbauld, and I am peculiarly indebted to you for the present of her works.

I can remember Mrs. B's poetry from early life, and I owe her more than delight. Some of her pieces we may suppose she will recollect for ever with pleasure, for they have lifted many minds to that pure world in which she has found rest. Much of the prose volume was new to me, and I felt that she had not received the praise due to her in this species of composition. I was struck with the felicity of the style, and the freshness and animation and frequently the originality of her thoughts.

I remember my short interview with her with much pleasure. Perhaps I never saw a person of her age who had preserved so much of youth—on whom time had laid so

gentle a hand. Her countenance had nothing of the rigidness and hard lines of advanced life, but responded to the mind like a young woman's. I carry it with me as one of the treasures of memory."

Mr. Crabb Robinson also in one of his last visits to her, remarks, as well as Dr. Channing, upon her personal appearance.

"I called on the Colliers, and then went to Mrs. Barbauld's. She was in good spirits, but she is now the confirmed old lady. Independently of her fine understanding, and literary reputation, she would be interesting. Her white locks, fair and unwrinkled skin, brilliant starched linen, and rich silk gown, make her a fit object for a painter. Her conversation is lively, her remarks judicious, and always pertinent." (Mr. Robinson's Diary.)

A letter to Miss Edgeworth, and the fragment of verse which follows it, are almost her last writings.

" My dear Miss Edgeworth,

I was very glad to see your hand writing again, and to hear that your pen was again in employment, that pen which has already given us so much pleasure, and from which, I hope, the world may expect pleasure and improvement for many years to come.

The Enigma* you do me the honour to ask for, will accompany this, but I have first to find it, for though I have looked a good deal, I have not yet been able to lay my hands on it. I beg to make proviso, that if I should want myself to insert it in any publication, I may be at liberty to do it. Though, truly, that is not very likely, for well do I feel, one faculty after another withdrawing, and the shades of evening closing fast around me, and be it so. What does life offer at past eighty, (at which venerable age, I arrived one day last June,) and I believe you will allow, that there is not much of new, of animating, of inviting, to be met with after that age. For my own

* In the Appendix.

part, I only find that many things I knew I have forgotten, many things I *thought* I knew, I find I knew nothing about; some things, I know, I have found not worth knowing, and some things I would give—Oh! what would one not give to know, are beyond the reach of human ken. Well, I believe this is what may be called prosing, and you can make much better use of your time than to read it. I saw yesterday two boys, modern Greeks, in the costume of their country, introduced by Mr. Bowring, who has the charge of them.—du Grec, ah ma sœur du Grec, ils parlent du Grec! I have been reading one or two American novels lately. They are very well, but I do not wish them to write novels yet. Let them explore and describe their new country. Let them record the actions of their Washington, the purest character perhaps, that history has to boast of; let them enjoy their free, their unexpensive government, number their rising towns, and boast that persecution does not set her bloody foot in any corner of their extensive territories.

Then let them kindle into poetry, but not yet, not till the more delicate shades and nicer delineations of life are familiar to them, let them descend to *novels*. But tempted, by writing to you, I am running on, till my eyes are tired, and perhaps you too. Compliments to Mrs. Edgeworth and all your family. If I find the riddle, I will send it you, mean while, I am, with the truest esteem and friendship, dear Miss Edgeworth, your affectionate friend,

A. L. Barbauld.

Stoke Newington,
Oct. 25th, 1823."

Fall, fall! poor leaf, that on the naked bough,
Sole lingering spectacle of sad decay,
Sits shivering at the blasts of dark November;
Thy fellows strew the ground, not one is left
To grace thy naked side; late who could count
Their number multitudinous and thick,
Veiling the noon-day blaze, behind their shade
The birds half-hid disported; clustering fruit
Behind their ample shade lay glowing ripe;
No bird salutes thee now; nor the green sap
Mounts in thy veins, thy spring is gone, thy summer;
Even the crimson tints,

Thy grave but rich autumnal livery,
That pleased the eye of contemplation—
Some filament perhaps, some tendril stronger
Than all the rest, resists the whistling blast.
Fall, fall, poor leaf,
Thy solitary single self shews more
The nakedness of winter,
Why wait and fall, and strew the ground like them?

The following is taken from Miss Aikin's Memoir.

"An asthmatic complaint which was slowly undermining her excellent constitution, more and more indisposed her for any exertion either of mind or body; but the arrival of a visitor had always the power to rouse her from a state of languor. Her powers of conversation continued to the last though her memory of recent circumstances became somewhat impaired. Her disposition, (of which sensibility was not in earlier life the leading feature,) now mellowed into softness, pleasingly exhibited. 'those tender tints that only time can give.' Her manners—never tainted by pride—which with the baser but congenial affection of envy was a total stranger to her bosom,

were now remarkable for their extreme humility; she spoke of every one not merely with the candour and forbearance which she had long practised, but with interest and kindness, with an indulgence which sometimes appeared but too comprehensive; she seemed reluctant to allow or believe that any of her fellow creatures had a failing, while she gave them credit gratuitously for many virtues. This state of mind, which with her native acuteness it must have cost her some struggles to attain, had at least the advantage of causing her easily to admit of such substitutes as occurred for those contemporary and truly congenial friendships, which in the course of nature were now fast failing her. She lost her early and affectionate friend Mrs. Kenrick in 1819. In December 1822 her brother sunk under a long decline which had served as a painfull preparation to the final parting. A few months later she lost in the excellent Mrs. John Taylor of Norwich, perhaps the most intimate and highly valued of all her distant friends.

A gentle and scarcely perceptible decline was now sloping the passage to the tomb. She felt and hailed it as a release from languor and infirmity, a passport to another and higher state of being. Her friends however flattered themselves that they might continue to enjoy her a little longer, and she had consented to remove to the house of her adopted son, that his affectionate attention and those of his family might be the solace of every remaining hour. But Providence had ordained it otherwise. She quitted indeed her own house, but whilst on a visit to the neighbouring one of her sister-in-law Mrs. Aikin, the constant and beloved friend of nearly her whole life, her bodily powers gave way almost suddenly, and after lingering a few days she expired without a struggle, on the 9th of March 1825, in the eighty second year of her age.

To claim for this distinguished woman the praise of purity and elevation of mind, may well seem superfluous. Her education and connections, the course of her life,

the whole tenour of her writings, bear testimony to this part of her character. It is a higher, or at least a rarer commendation to add that no one ever better loved 'a sister's praise,' even that of such sisters as might have been peculiarly regarded in the light of rivals. She was acquainted with almost all the principal female writers of her time, and there was not one whom she failed to mention in terms of admiration, esteem, or affection. To humbler aspirants, who often applied to her for advice or assistance, she was invariably courteous, and often serviceable. The sight of youth and beauty was peculiarly gratifying to her fancy and feelings, and children and young persons were large sharers in her benevolence; she loved their society, and would often invite them to spend weeks and months in her house, where she spared no pains to amuse and instruct them, and she seldom failed to recall herself to their recollection, by affectionate and playful letters, or welcome presents.

In the conjugal relation, her conduct

was guided by the highest principles of love and duty. As a sister, the uninterrupted flow of her affection, manifested by numberless tokens of love—not alone to her brother, but to every member of his family, will ever be recalled by them, with emotions of tenderness, respect, and gratitude. She passed through a long life, without having dropped, it is believed, a single friendship, and without having drawn upon herself a single enmity which could be called personal."

Though in the preceding pages, Mrs. Barbauld's literary character has been chiefly dwelt upon, it would be an imperfect view of it, which did not include some notice of her deep interest in the cause of civil and religious liberty.

Living as she did, through times in which the profession of liberal opinions was in the highest degree unpopular, not to say dangerous, she never hesitated to employ all her gifts of eloquence and reasoning, to endeavour to bring about a better state of things, and as a dissenter especially, to free

those who shared her opinions, from the social disabilities, which after the lapse of many years were happily removed.

On the defeat of a Bill brought before Parliament in 1790, for the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, she wrote a powerful and eloquent pamphlet, which though anonymous, was soon recognised as hers. The following letters addressed to her, among many others, at that time, from Mr. Rogers, and Dr. Moore the author of Zeluco, and father of General Sir John Moore, show the appreciation of the liberal party of her efforts on this occasion.

"Newington Green, March 29th, 1790.
Dear Madam,

I have read over and over again the address to the opposers of the Repeal, and cannot sufficiently thank you for having first suggested it to my notice; though its spirit and elegance are now indeed the subject of universal admiration and curiosity. Its author may elude our search for a little while, but cannot long remain undiscovered.

Its fine irony, its elevation and sublimity of sentiment, will soon blaze out the secret, though 'wrapt in tenfold night.' And whoever has read the essays of a lady whose superior genius every one has the discernment to see and admire except yourself, is already, I think, in the possession of a clue that cannot fail to direct his inquiries.

I remain with great respect,
Dear Madam, your obliged
Friend and Servant,
SAML. ROGERS.

I beg my best Compts. to Mr. Barbauld."

"To the Revd. Rochemont Barbauld,
Clifford Street,
29 Nov. 1790.

Dear Sir,

When I had the pleasure of seeing Mrs. Barbauld and you at your house at Hampstead, I had not read her address to the opposers of the repeal of the Test Acts, but I had heard a report of her intending to answer Mr. Burke's famous pamphlets,

—and I confess I heard this with some degree of concern, for notwithstanding the high opinion I had formed of her talents, I could not help being a little uneasy at the thoughts of her entering the lists with so formidable an antagonist—but I have just finished the perusal of her address, and all my fears are vanished. I hardly know anything in the English language superior in delicacy of irony, and strength of reasoning, to that truly eloquent performance. And in my opinion she could not employ her time more to her own honour and the public benefit, than by publishing her sentiments on Mr. Burke's works.

I beg you will offer my respectful thanks to Mrs. Barbauld for the pleasure I received from her pamphlet, which I sincerely think the most elegant and most judicious production that has issued from the press for a very long time.

I am dear Sir, with much esteem,

Your obedient humble servant.

T. Moore."

In a letter to a friend announcing the death of her, who had been to him as a mother, Mr. Charles Rochemont Aikin concludes with the following passage.

"I will fill this page with a few lines which will interest you, as being I believe, the very last which my venerable aunt committed to paper when she felt the hand of death approaching her. It is a few unfinished sentences, but to me deeply interesting."

"Who are you?
Do you not know me, have you not expected me?
Whither do you carry me?
Come with me and you shall know.
The way is dark.
It is well trodden.
Yes, in the forward track.
Come along!
Oh, shall I see there my beloved ones, will they welcome me, will they know me, oh, tell me, tell me, thou canst tell me?
Yes, but thou must come first.
Stop a little, keep thy hand off till thou hast told me!
I never wait.
Oh shall I see the warm sun again in my cold grave?

Nothing is there that can feel the sun.
Oh where then?
Come, I say."

Mrs. Barbauld was buried in the family vault of Dr. Aikin in Stoke Newington Church-yard.

Shortly after her death Mr. C. R. Aikin was requested by the congregation of Newington Green Chapel, where she had attended as long as her strength allowed, to place some memorial of her upon their walls.

A marble tablet was therefore erected by him with the following inscription written by her nephew Arthur Aikin.

EPITAPH.

IN MEMORY OF

ANNA LETITIA BARBAULD,

DAUGHTER OF JOHN AIKIN, D.D.

AND WIFE OF

THE REV. ROCHEMONT BARBAULD,

FORMERLY THE RESPECTED MINISTER OF THIS CONGREGATION.

SHE WAS BORN AT KIBWORTH IN LEICESTERSHIRE, 20TH JUNE, 1743,
AND DIED AT STOKE NEWINGTON, 9TH MARCH, 1825.

ENDOWED BY THE GIVER OF ALL GOOD
WITH WIT, GENIUS, POETIC TALENT, AND A VIGOROUS UNDERSTANDING
SHE EMPLOYED THESE HIGH GIFTS
IN PROMOTING THE CAUSE OF HUMANITY, PEACE, AND JUSTICE,
OF CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY,
OF PURE, ARDENT, AND AFFECTIONATE DEVOTION.

LET THE YOUNG, NURTURED BY HER WRITINGS IN THE PURE SPIRIT
OF CHRISTIAN MORALITY;
LET THOSE OF MATURER YEARS, CAPABLE OF APPRETIATING
THE ACUTENESS, THE BRILLIANT FANCY, AND SOUND REASONING
OF HER LITERARY COMPOSITIONS;
LET THE SURVIVING FEW WHO SHARED HER DELIGHTFUL
AND INSTRUCTIVE CONVERSATION,
BEAR WITNESS
THAT THIS MONUMENT RECORDS
NO EXAGGERATED PRAISE.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX.

From the Rev. Dr. Doddridge to Miss Jennings, (afterwards Mrs. Aikin.)

D^r. Mad^m.,

I owe Dear Miss Jenny and her good Mamma my earliest Thanks for all the Pleasure I had in the Company of both at Harborough, and must confess that when I left it I hardly expected so much as I found in conversing with Miss Cotton at Maidwell. It seems to me that I am going into a kind of Solitude when I am leaving you, but it prov'd otherwise on Fryday and Saturday. Besides the Satisfaction I always find in the Conversation of so valuable a Friend as Lady Russel, the Lady I mention'd before gave me a great Deal. I know you hear this with a charitable Pleasure and flatter your self with a secret Hope that she is making a Conquest on a fond Heart from which you might apprehend some farther Trouble, of that Mad^m you will judge when I tell you, that the most delightful

part of her Conversation was that which turn'd upon her Father and Mother of whom she gave me the following Account which I humbly recommend to your serious Perusal.

Mr. Cotton was turn'd of 30 when he fell in Love w^h the Lady who is now his Wife. She was then like your self a gay beautiful Creature just in the Bloom of fifteen, in whom that truly wise and good Man discern'd those early Marks of Piety Genius Politeness good Humour and Discretion which I am more and more admiring in you, and which engage him to prefer her to those whose Age might have seem'd more suitable to his own. He pursued his Addresses with all possible Application and exerted in her Service all the Tenderness with which so charming a Creature could inspire him and all the politeness which he had learnt from a most liberal Education and several years Travels thro' Italy and France in the Company of some Persons of great Distinction which renders him thus late in the Evening of Life incomparably more agreeable than the generality of Mankind in its Morning or Meridian. Miss Biddy (for that was her name) heard him with all the Indifference in the World for two years together and often declares that tho' she treated him civily as a Gentleman and a Friend and the rather out of Regard to her Mamma who had a great Regard and Affection for him yet she never

entertain'd any Thoughts of Love to him till within three Weeks of their Marriage. At last she gave him her Heart with her hand in the 17th year of her Age and ye 33d of his. And it is now almost half a Century that she has been rejoicing in it as the kindest Providence of her Life. They have been still the Joy of their Friends and each other and are concluding an honourable and a delightful Life together as gracefully and as amiably as any Couple I ever knew; and I verily believe that she is as dear to him now tho' she is rather older than he was in the first Months of their Marriage.

I might make a variety of pertinent and useful Reflections on this most entertaining and edyfying Story but I shall content my self with mentioning two and refer the rest to your private Meditations.

It is possible (you see) for a Man of a very agreeable and valuable Character in Life and for a Minister too, deliberately to chuse and passionately to love a Lady considerably younger than himself, even an Infant of 15 (and how much more one who will be 16 in October) And he may continue for Life fond and proud of that Choice.

And than secondly and lastly (which is to me much more surprizing than the former) that a Lady of that tender and impressible age may hear a Courtship (not the dullest or most despicable in the World) for two years together without any Senti-

ment of Love or Thoughts of Marriage and yet afterwards receive it with an intire Consent and that peculiar Pleasure which I suppose Nothing upon Earth can give but the Surrender of the Heart to a worthy Man who has deserv'd it by a long Course of Service and Sufferings.

You must pardon me Madam if after all this I conclude with my hearty wishes that if we live to the year 1770 a Daughter every Way as agreeable and valuable as Miss Cotton may he telling the same Story (as far as the inferiority of my Character will admit) of the lovely Trifler who is now smiling at so extravagant a Thought

and her most affectionate Friend
and obliged humble Servant.
P. Doddridge.

Northampton, May 29th, 1730.

Your Aunt Norris went away this morning. Pray give my best services to your Dear Mamma, not forgetting my other Friends at Harborough. I long and yet I fear to see you.

I hope to be wth you in a few Days, but will keep your Brother here so long as I stay myself.

BISHOP BONNER'S GHOST,

By Mrs. Hannah More—written 1789.

In the gardens of the palace at Fulham is a dark recess, at the end of this stands a chair which once belonged to Bishop Bonner. A certain Bishop (Porteus) more than 200 years after the death of the aforesaid Bonner, one morning undertook to cut with his own hand a narrow walk through this thicket. He had no sooner begun, than lo! suddenly up started from the chair the Ghost of Bishop Bonner, who in a tone of just and bitter indignation uttered the following verses.

Reformer hold! ah spare my shade,
Respect the hallowed dead;
Vain prayer, I see the op'ning glade,
See utter darkness fled.

Just so your innovating hand,
Let in the moral light;
So chased from this bewilder'd land,
Fled intellectual night.

Where now that holy gloom which hid,
Fair truth from vulgar ken;
Where now that wisdom which forbid,
To think that monks were men.

The tangled mazes of the schools,
Which spread so thick before;
Which knaves entwin'd to puzzle fools,
Shall catch mankind no more.

Those charming intricacies, where?
Those venerable lies?
Those legends, once the Church's care,
Those sweet perplexities?

Ah! fatal age, whose sons combined,
Of credit to exhaust us;
Ah! fatal age, which gave mankind
A Luther and a Faustus.

Had only Jack and Martin lived,
Our power had slowly fled;
Our influence longer had survived,
Had laymen never read.

For knowledge flew, like magic spell,
By Typographic art;
Oh shame! a peasant now can tell,
If priests the truth impart.

Ye councils, pilgrimages, creeds!
Synods, decrees, and rules!
Ye warrants of unholy deeds,
Indulgences, and bulls.

Where are ye now? and where alas!
The pardons we dispense?
And penances the sponge of sins;
And Peter's holy pence?

Where now the beads which used to swell,
Lean virtue's spare amount?
Here only faith and goodness fill,
A heretic's account.

But soft—what gracious form appears?
Is this a convents' life,
Atrocious sight! by all my fears,
A prelate with a wife!

Ah! sainted Mary not for this
Our pious labours joined,
The witcheries of domestic bliss
Had shook e'en Gardiner's mind.

Hence all the sinful, human ties,
Which mar the cloister's plan;
Hence all the weak fond charities,
Which make man feel for man.

But tortured memory vainly speaks,
The projects we design'd;
While this apostate bishop seeks,
The freedom of mankind.

Oh, born in everything to shake,
The systems plann'd by me!
So heterodox that he would make,
Both soul and body free.

Nor clime nor colour stays his hand,
With charity deprav'd,
He would from Thames to Gambia's strand,
Have all be free and sav'd.

And what shall change his wayward heart,
His wilful spirit turn?
For those his labours can't convert,
His weakness will not burn.

A GOOD OLD PAPIST.

"THE APOLOGY OF THE BISHOPS," IN ANSWER TO "BONNER'S GHOST."

By Mrs. Barbauld.

Right Revd. Brother and so forth
The Bishops send you greeting,
They honour much the zeal and worth
In you so highly meeting.

But your abuse of us, good Sir
Is very little founded!
We blush that you should make a stir
With notions so ill grounded.

'Tis not to us should be addrest
Your ghostly exhortation,
If heresy still lifts her crest
The fault is in the nation.

The State, in spite of all our pains,
Has left us in the lurch,
The spirit of the times restrains
The spirit of the Church.

To this day down from famed Sacheverel
Our zeal has never cooled,
We mean to Truth and Freedom ever ill,
But we are over ruled.

Still damning Creeds framed long ago,
Help us to vent our spite;
And penal laws our teeth to shew
Although we cannot bite.

Our spleen against reforming cries
Is now as ever shewn;
Though we can't blind the nation's eyes
We still can shut our own.

Well warned from what abroad befalls,
We keep all tight at home;
Nor brush one cobweb from St. Paul's,
Lest it should shake the dome.

Once in an age a Louth may chance
To wield the pastoral staff,
And Fortune for a whim advance
A———or———*

Yet do not thou by fears misled
To rash conclusions jump,
So little leaven scarce appears,
And leaveneth *not* the lump.

What though the arm of flesh be dead
And lost the power it gives,
The spirit quickeneth, it is said,
And sure the spirit lives.

The Birmingham Apostle then,†
And Essex Street Apostate,‡
Debarred from paper and from pen
Should both lament their lost state.

Church maxims do not greatly vary,
Take it upon my honour,
Place on the throne another Mary,
We'll find her soon a Bonner.

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* A———or——— Hoadly or Landaff?

† Dr. Priestley. ‡ The Revd. Theophilus Lindsey.

WASHING-DAY.

.....and their voice,
Turning again towards childish treble, pipes
And whistles in its sound.——

The Muses are turned gossips; they have lost
The buskined step, and clear high-sounding phrase,
Language of gods. Come then, domestic Muse,
In slipshod measure loosely prattling on
Of farm or orchard, pleasant curds and cream,
Or drowning flies, or shoe lost in the mire
By little whimpering boy, with rueful face;
Come, Muse, and sing the dreaded Washing-Day.
Ye who beneath the yoke of wedlock bend,
With bowed soul, full well ye ken the day
Which week, smooth sliding after week brings on
Too soon;—for to that day nor peace belongs
Nor comfort;—ere the first gray streak of dawn,
The red-armed washers come and chase repose.
Nor pleasant smile, nor quaint device of mirth,

E'er visited that day: the very cat,
From the wet kitchen scared and reeking hearth,
Visits the parlour,—an unwonted guest.
The silent breakfast-meal is soon dispatched;
Uninterrupted, save by anxious looks
Cast at the lowering sky, if sky should lower.
From that last evil, O preserve us heavens!
For should the skies pour down, adieu to all
Remains of quiet: then expect to hear
Of sad disasters,—dirt and gravel stains
Hard to efface, and loaded lines at once
Snapped short,—and linen-horse by dog thrown down,
And all the petty miseries of life.
Saints have been calm while stretched upon the rack,
And Guatimozin smiled on burning coals;
But never yet did housewife notable
Greet with a smile a rainy washing-day.
—But grant the welkin fair, require not thou
Who call'st thyself perchance the master there,
Or study swept, or nicely dusted coat,
Or usual 'tendance;—ask not, indiscreet,
Thy stockings mended, though the yawning rents
Gape wide as Erebus; nor hope to find
Some snug recess impervious; shouldst thou try
The 'customed garden walks, thine eye shall rue
The budding fragrance of thy tender shrubs,
Myrtle or rose, all crushed beneath the weight
Of coarse checked apron,—with impatient hand
Twitched off when showers impend: or crossing lines
Shall mar thy musing, as the wet cold sheet

Flaps in thy face abrupt. Woe to the friend
Whose evil stars have urged him forth to claim
On such a day the hospitable rites!
Looks, blank at best, and stinted courtesy,
Shall he receive. Vainly he feeds his hopes
With dinner of roast chicken, savoury pie,
Or tart or pudding:—pudding he nor tart
That day shall eat; nor, though the husband try,
Mending what can't be helped, to kindle mirth
From cheer deficient, shall his consort's brow
Clear up propitious:—the unlucky guest
In silence dines, and early slinks away.
I well remember, when a child, the awe
This day struck into me; for then the maids,
I scarce knew why, looked cross, and drove me from them:
Nor soft caress could I obtain, nor hope
Usual indulgencies, jelly or creams,
Relic of costly suppers, and set by
For me their petted one; or buttered toast,
When butter was forbid; or thrilling tale
Of ghost, or witch, or murder—so I went
And sheltered me beside the parlour fire:
There my dear grandmother, eldest of forms,
Tended the little ones, and watched from harm,
Anxiously fond, though oft her spectacles
With elfin cunning hid, and oft the pins
Drawn from her ravelled stocking, might have soured
One less indulgent.—
At intervals my mother's voice was heard,
Urging dispatch: briskly the work went on,

All hands employed to wash, to rinse, to wring,
To fold, and starch, and clap, and iron, and plait.
Then would I sit me down, and ponder much
Why washings were. Sometimes through hollow bowl
Of pipe amused we blew, and sent aloft
The floating bubbles; little dreaming then
To see, Mongolfier, thy silken ball
Ride buoyant through the clouds—so near approach
The sports of children and the toils of men.
Earth, air, and sky, and ocean, hath its bubbles,
And verse is one of them—this most of all.

LIFE.

Animula, vagula, blandula.

Life! I know not what thou art,
But know that thou and I must part;
And when, or how, or where we met,
I own to me's a secret yet.
But this I know, when thou art fled,
Where'er they lay these limbs, this head,
No clod so valueless shall be,
As all that then remains of me.
O whither, whither, dost thou fly,
Where bend unseen thy trackless course,
And in this strange divorce,
Ah tell where I must seek this compound I?
To the vast ocean of empyreal flame,
From whence thy essence came,
Dost thou thy flight pursue, when freed
From matter's base encumbering weed?
Or dost thou, hid from sight,
Wait, like some spell-bound knight,

Through blank oblivious years th' appointed hour,
To break thy trance and reassume thy power?
Yet canst thou without thought or feeling be?
O say what art thou, when no more thou'rt thee?

Life! we've been long together,
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather;
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear;
Perhaps 't will cost a sigh, a tear;
Then steal away, give little warning,
Choose thine own time;
Say not Good night, but in some brighter clime
Bid me Good morning.

ENIGMA.

We are spirits all in white
On a field as black as night,
There we dance and sport and play
Changing every changing day;
Yet with us is wisdom found
As we move in mystic round.
Mortal, wouldst thou know the grains
That Ceres heaps on Libya's plains,
Or leaves that yellow Autumn strews,
Or the stars that Herschel views,
Or find how many drops would drain
The wide-scooped bosom of the main,
Or measure central depths below,—
Ask of us, and thou shalt know.
With fairy feet we compass round
The pyramid's capacious bound
Or step by step ambitious climb
The cloud-capt mountain's height sublime.
Riches though we do not use
'Tis ours to gain, and ours to lose.
From Araby the Blest we came
In every land our tongue's the same;
And if our number you require

Go count the bright Aonian quire.
Wouldst thou cast a spell to find
The track of light, the speed of wind,
Or when the snail with creeping pace
Shall the swelling globe embrace;
Mortal, ours the powerful spell;—
Ask of us, for we can tell.

(FIGURES ON A SLATE.)

ARTHUR AIKIN, was born at Warrington in Lancashire, May 19, 1773, and died in London in 1854.

He was the eldest son of John Aikin M.D. long and honorably distinguished in the world of letters.

In Arthur the family vocation declared itself from infancy. He could read well before he had completed his second year. In his seventh, his father entered him at the excellent Free School of his native town. The start thus gained was never lost. He derived from his father, together with an ardent love of literature, ancient and moden, a zeal for several of those branches of science which he cultivated with the most success in after life; for Zoology, to the study of which his father had been incited by his intimate correspondence with Mr. Pennant; for English Botany, and for Chemistry, a visit at the age of twelve in the house of Dr.

Priestley, then pursuing at Birmingham, his brilliant course of chemical discovery, confirmed him in his predilection for this science.

The destination of the grave and studious boy was early fixed for the Christian Ministry. After some years passed under the tuition of Mr. and Mrs. Barbauld he became a student of the New College at Hackney, and a favorite pupil in their respective lines of the learned Gilbert Wakefield, and of Dr. Priestley, who delighted him by claiming his assistance in the arrangement of his *new* laboratory.

Mr. Aikin was for nearly two years one of the Ministers of a highly respectable congregation at Shrewsbury.

At the end of this time, from motives which did him nothing but honour, he relinquished his profession, but not his connection with that part of the country; he made several tours in Wales, of one of which he published an interesting and instructive account, and he was the first to investigate and describe the geology of Shropshire.

Henceforth his home was in London; and for many years in the house of his beloved brother the late Mr. Charles Aikin, in conjunction with whom he published in 1797 the Chemical Dictionary. In this work the separate articles are not assigned to their respective authors, so intimate was the concert between the Brothers, so equally shared

the labour and the ability! Through a long career he preserved without the smallest deviation, "the even tenor of his way." A total absence of ambition; a natural shyness which shrunk from all display; a taciturnity often painful and mortifying to his friends, withheld him from ever taking in mixed society, or in general estimation the place which his eminent abilities, his scientific skill, and the extraordinary variety, extent, and accuracy of his knowledge, justly entitled him; on the other hand he never engaged in a controversy and never made an enemy. His wants were few, his manners simple, kind and courteous, his affections tender and constant; his temper was imperturbable; his charity unfailing, his disinterestedness exemplary, his morals spotless.

AGAINST INCONSISTENCY

IN OUR

EXPECTATIONS.

1773.

AGAINST INCONSISTENCY IN OUR EXPECTATIONS.

"WHAT is more reasonable, than that they who "take pains for any thing, should get most in "that particular for which they take pains? "They have taken pains for power, you for right "principles; they for riches, you for a proper use "of the appearances of things: see whether they "have the advantage of you in that for which you "have taken pains, and which they neglect: If "they are in power, and you not, why will not "you speak the truth to yourself, that you do "nothing for the sake of power, but that they do "every thing? No, but since I take care to have "right principles, it is more reasonable that I "should have power. Yes, in respect to what "you take care about, your principles. But give "up to others the things in which they have "taken more care than you. Else it is just as

"if, because you have right principles, you should
"think it fit that when you shoot an arrow, you
"should hit the mark better than an archer, or
"that you should forge better than a smith."

CARTER'S EPICTETUS.

As most of the unhappiness in the world arises rather from disappointed desires, than from positive evil, it is of the utmost consequence to attain just notions of the laws and order of the universe, that we may not vex ourselves with fruitless wishes, or give way to groundless and unreasonable discontent. The laws of natural philosophy, indeed, are tolerably understood and attended to; and though we may suffer inconveniences, we are seldom disappointed in consequence of them. No man expects to preserve orange-trees in the open air through an English winter; or when he has planted an acorn, to see it become a large oak in a few months. The mind of man naturally yields to necessity; and our wishes soon subside when we see the impossibility of their being gratified. Now, upon an accurate inspection, we shall find, in the moral government of the world, and the order of the intellectual system, laws as determinate, fixed, and invariable, as any in Newton's Principia. The progress of vegetation is not more

certain then the growth of habit; nor is the power of attraction more clearly proved than the force of affection or the influence of example. The man therefore who has well studied the operations of nature in mind as well as matter, will acquire a certain moderation and equity in his claims upon Providence. He never will be disappointed either in himself or others. He will act with precision; and expect that effect, and that alone, from his efforts, which they are naturally adapted to produce. For want of this, men of merit and integrity often censure the dispositions of Providence for suffering characters they despise to run away with advantages which, they yet know, are purchased by such means as a high and noble spirit could never submit to. If you refuse to pay the price, why expect the purchase? We should consider this world as a great mart of commerce, where fortune exposes to our view various commodities, riches, ease, tranquillity, fame, integrity, knowledge. Every thing is marked at a settled price. Our time, our labour, our ingenuity, is so much ready money which we are to lay out to the best advantage. Examine, compare, choose, reject; but stand to your own judgement; and do not, like children, when you have purchased one thing, repine that you do not possess another which you did not purchase. Such is the force of well-regulated industry, that a steady and vigorous exertion of our

faculties, directed to one end, will generally insure success. Would you, for instance, be rich? Do you think that single point worth the sacrificing every thing else to? You may then be rich. Thousands have become so from the lowest beginnings by toil, and patient diligence, and attention to the minutest articles of expense and profit. But you must give up the pleasures of leisure, of a vacant mind, of a free unsuspicious temper. If you preserve your integrity, it must be a coarse-spun and vulgar honesty. Those high and lofty notions of morals which you brought with you from the schools, must be considerably lowered, and mixed with the baser alloy of a jealous and worldly-minded prudence. You must learn to do hard, if not unjust things; and for the nice embarrassments of a delicate and ingenuous spirit, it is necessary for you to get rid of them as fast as possible. You must shut your heart against the Muses, and be content to feed your understanding with plain, household truths. In short, you must not attempt to enlarge your ideas, or polish your taste, or refine your sentiments; but must keep on in one beaten track, without turning aside either to the right hand or to the left. "But I cannot submit to drudgery like this—I feel a spirit above it." 'Tis well: be above it then; only do not repine that you are not rich.

Is knowledge the pearl of price? That too may

be purchased—by steady application, and long solitary hours of study and reflection. Bestow these, and you shall be wise. "But (says the man of letters) what a hardship is it that many an illiterate fellow who cannot construe the motto of the arms on his coach, shall raise a fortune and make a figure, while I have little more than the common conveniences of life." *Et tibi magna satis!*—Was it in order to raise a fortune that you consumed the sprightly hours of youth in study and retirement? Was it to be rich that you grew pale over the midnight lamp, and distilled the sweetness from the Greek and Roman spring? You have then mistaken your path, and ill employed your industry. "What reward have I then for all my labours?" What reward! A large comprehensive soul, well purged from vulgar fears and perturbations, and prejudices; able to comprehend and interpret the works of man—of God. A rich flourishing, cultivated mind, pregnant with inexhaustible stores of entertainment and reflection. A perpetual spring of fresh ideas; and the conscious dignity of superior intelligence. Good heaven! and what reward can you ask besides?

"But is it not some reproach upon the economy of Providence that such a one, who is a mean dirty fellow, should have amassed wealth enough to buy half a nation?" Not in the least. He made him-

self a mean dirty fellow for that very end. He has paid his health, his conscience, his liberty for it; and will you envy him his bargain? Will you hang your head and blush in his presence because he outshines you in equipage and show? Lift up your brow with a noble confidence, and say to yourself, I have not these things, it is true; but it is because I have not sought, because I have not desired them; it is because I possess something better. I have chosen my lot. I am content and satisfied.

Your are a modest man—You love quiet and independence, and have a delicacy and reserve in your temper which renders it impossible for you to elbow your way in the world, and be the herald of your own merits. Be content then with a modest retirement, with the esteem of your intimate friends, with the praises of a blameless heart, and a delicate ingenuous spirit; but resign the splendid distinctions of the world to those who can better scramble for them.

The man whose tender sensibility of conscience and strict regard to the rules of morality makes him scrupulous and fearful of offending, is often heard to complain of the disadvantages he lies under in every path of honour and profit. "Could I but get over some nice points, and conform to the practice and opinion of those about me, I might stand as fair a chance as others for dignities and preferment."

And why can you not? What hinders you from discarding this troublesome scrupulosity of yours which stands so grievously in your way? If it be a small thing to enjoy a healthful mind, sound at the very core, that does not shrink from the keenest inspection; inward freedom from remorse and perturbation; unsullied whiteness and simplicity of manners; a genuine integrity

"Pure in the last recesses of the mind;"

if you think these advantages an inadequate recompense for what you resign, dismiss your scruples this instant, and be a slave-merchant, a parasite, or—what you please.

"If these be motives weak, break off betimes;"

and as you have not spirit to assert the dignity of virtue, be wise enough not to forego the emoluments of vice.

I much admire the spirit of the ancient philosophers, in that they never attempted, as our moralists often do, to lower the tone of philosophy, and make it consistent with all the indulgences of indolence and sensuality. They never thought of having the bulk of mankind for their disciples; but kept themselves as distinct as possible from a worldly life. They plainly told men what sacrifices were required, and what advantages they were which might be expected.

"Si virtus hoc una potest dare, fortis omissis
Hoc age deliciis....."

If you would be a philosopher these are the terms. You must do thus and thus: there is no other way. If not, go and be one of the vulgar.

There is no one quality gives so much dignity to a character as consistency of conduct. Even if a man's pursuits be wrong and unjustifiable, yet if they are prosecuted with steadiness and vigour, we cannot withhold our admiration. The most characteristic mark of a great mind is to choose some one important object, and pursue it through life. It was this made Cæsar a great man. His object was ambition; he pursued it steadily, and was always ready to sacrifice to it every interfering passion or inclination.

There is a pretty passage in one of Lucian's dialogues, where Jupiter complains to Cupid that though he has had so many intrigues, he was never sincerely beloved. In order to be loved, says Cupid, you must lay aside your ægis and your thunderbolts, and you must curl and perfume your hair, and place a garland on your head, and walk with a soft step, and assume a winning obsequious deportment. But, replied Jupiter, I am not willing to resign so much of my dignity. Then, returns Cupid, leave off desiring to be loved—He wanted to be Jupiter and Adonis at the same time.

It must be confessed, that men of genius are of all others most inclined to make these unreasonable claims. As their relish for enjoyment is strong, their views large and comprehensive, and they feel themselves lifted above the common bulk of mankind, they are apt to slight that natural reward of praise and admiration which is ever largely paid to distinguished abilities; and to expect to be called forth to public notice and favour: without considering that their talents are commonly very unfit for active life; that their eccentricity and turn for speculation disqualifies them for the business of the world, which is best carried on by men of moderate genius; and that society is not obliged to reward any one who is not useful to it. The poets have been a very unreasonable race, and have often complained loudly of the neglect of genius and the ingratitude of the age. The tender and pensive Cowley, and the elegant Shenstone, had their minds tinctured by this discontent; and even the sublime melancholy of Young was too much owing to the stings of disappointed ambition.

The moderation we have been endeavouring to inculcate will likewise prevent much mortification and disgust in our commerce with mankind. As we ought not to wish in ourselves, so neither should we expect in our friends contrary qualifications. Young and sanguine, when we enter the world, and

feel our affections drawn forth by any particular excellence in a character, we immediately give it credit for all others; and are beyond measure disgusted when we come to discover, as we soon must discover, the defects in the other side of the balance. But nature is much more frugal than to heap together all manner of shining qualities in one glaring mass. Like a judicious painter she endeavours to preserve a certain unity of style and colouring in her pieces. Models of absolute perfection are only to be met with in romance; where exquisite beauty, and brilliant wit, and profound judgement, and immaculate virtue, are all blended together to adorn some favourite character. As an anatomist knows that the racer cannot have the strength and muscles of the draught horse; and that winged men, griffins, and mermaids must be mere creatures of the imagination; so the philosopher is sensible that there are combinations of moral qualities which never can take place but in idea. There is a different air and complexion in characters as well as in faces, though perhaps each equally beautiful; and the excellencies of one cannot be transferred to the other. Thus if one man possesses a stoical apathy of soul, acts independent of the opinion of the world, and fulfills every duty with mathematical exactness, you must not expect that man to be greatly influenced by the weakness of pity, or the partialities of friendship :

you must not be offended that he does not fly to meet you after a short absence; or require from him the convivial spirit and honest effusions of a warm, open, susceptible heart. If another is remarkable for a lively active zeal, inflexible integrity, a strong indignation against vice, and freedom in reproving it, he will probably have some little bluntness in his address not altogether suitable to polished life; he will want the winning arts of conversation; he will disgust by a kind of haughtiness and negligence in his manner, and often hurt the delicacy of his acquaintance with harsh and disagreeable truths.

We usually say—that man is a genius, *but* he has some whims and oddities—such a one has a very general knowledge, *but* he is superficial; &c. Now in all such cases we should speak more rationally did we substitute *therefore* for *but*. He is a genius, *therefore* he is whimsical; and the like.

It is the fault of the present age, owing to the freer commerce that different ranks and professions now enjoy with each other, that characters are not marked with sufficient strength: the several classes run too much into one another. We have fewer pedants, it is true, but we have fewer striking originals. Every one is expected to have such a tincture of general knowledge as is incompatible with going deep into any science; and such a conformity to fashionable manners as checks the free

workings of the ruling passion, and gives an insipid sameness to the face of society, under the idea of polish and regularity.

There is a cast of manners peculiar and becoming to each age, sex, and profession; one, therefore, should not throw out illiberal and common-place censures against another. Each is perfect in its kind. A woman as a woman: a tradesman as a tradesman. We are often hurt by the brutality and sluggish conceptions of the vulgar; not considering that some there must be to be hewers of wood and drawers of water, and that cultivated genius, or even any great refinement and delicacy in their moral feelings, would be a real misfortune to them.

Let us than study the philosophy of the human mind. The man who is master of this science, will know what to expect from every one. From this man, wise advice; from that cordial sympathy; from another, casual entertainment. The passions and inclinations of others are his tools which he can use with as much precision as he would the mechanical powers; and he can as readily make allowance for the workings of vanity, or the bias of self-interest in his friends, as for the power of friction, or the irregularities of the needle.

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